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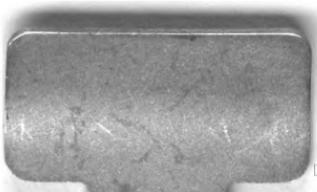
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Catholic church, the

The
CATHOLIC CHURCH
THE TRUE CHURCH
OF THE BIBLE,
O'CONNELL

Very full



The Catholic Church the True Church of the Bible

BY

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PREFACE

THE Church is the body of the faithful who believe in Christ, accept revealed truth and are guided in their conduct by its requirements.

There is only one true Church of God. Indeed, there can be only one, since God is truth; truth is ever the same and the Spirit of Truth abides in the Church until the end of time.

It will perhaps strike many as less obvious that there has never been but one true Church of God. That fact becomes evident when we reflect that the same Eternal Truth has ever lived in the Church from the very beginning of creation; and we ascertain that fact from the Bible.

Human nature has undergone no essential departure from what it was in the beginning. It consists of body and soul; and just as all attempts to trace a specific change in the material or bodily part of human nature have failed, so must our will ever fail in the degrading attempt to eliminate the spiritual element of human nature, viz., the soul.

It is through that most noble part of man's nature, the soul, that its Creator has established spiritual relations with Himself. These relations

between God and the soul of man are what is called religion.

From the very beginning of its existence both the constituent parts of human nature have been subject to these religious relations in accordance with the expressed will of God, for the time being.

God's holy will was expressed and communicated to man either directly by His Word and by interior moving of intellect and will, or indirectly by the words of a prophet and by inspired writing.

We learn from the Bible that there were three dispensations under which the Church of God existed upon earth, and the beginnings of each were the direct action of God: these are the Law of Nature, the Law of Moses and the Law of Christ. God spoke to Adam at the origin of the Law of Nature; He spoke to Abraham and Moses when He established the Old Covenant; and the Word of God, Christ, in fulfillment of these two, spoke to mankind and gave definite and inalterable shape to His revelation and to His Church.

The development of all three of these divine dispensations was made in an indirect way, but by means readily recognized as divine. Of these indirect relations of the Deity with man we have the inspired record in the Sacred Scriptures, called the Holy Bible. Every phase of the

Church, every one of the three epochs of religion, mentioned above, is in accordance with the Bible narrative, and is a component part of the one true Church of Christ, which teaches Catholic, that is, universal, truth.

The Catholic Church began in the garden of Eden, when the Woman and Child (Gen. iii, 15) were revealed to Adam and Eve. In the divine promise that the Seed, the Son of the Woman, would crush the serpent's head, Christ dominates and is the essential feature of Redemption. The Law of God being written in the hearts of men, each one had to be true to the unerring decrees of conscience, obey the lawfully constituted authority of the head of the family and believe in the Redeemer to come, or be outside of the pale of God's elect.

With the selection of Abraham as Father of the faithful and the promulgation of the Ten Commandments through Moses, divine truth was vouchsafed to man in more plentiful measure. The old truth remained, but more explicit revelation was made. The Constitution of the Church was adumbrated in the synagogue and its precepts and ceremonies prescribed. A law written on two tables of stone and enforced by prophets had to be obeyed and belief was exacted in the future Christ, the Messiah to be born of a Virgin

(Isaias vii, 14), as well as obedience to those who sat in the chair of Moses.

Finally, “God who at sundry times and in divers manners spoke, in times past, to the fathers by the prophets, in these days hath spoken to us by his Son” (Heb. i, 1, 2). Christ, the promised Redeemer, the Messiah, is born of the Virgin. (Matt. i, 22, 23.) The New Testament tells the story of the fulfilment of all prophecies and the coming of the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of Truth. He taught all truth and is to abide with the Church until the end of time. The same divine truths that were revealed centuries ago still abide, and all truth designed for man’s knowledge is perfected to undergo neither change nor addition.

“Do not think,” says Christ, “that I am come to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I am come not to destroy but to fulfil. For, amen I say unto you, till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall not pass from the Law till all be fulfilled.” (Matt. v, 17, 18.)

Our author proves, beyond a possibility of doubt, that the whole law and the revealed Scriptures have all been fulfilled in the Catholic Church founded by Christ and destined to abide under the guidance of God the Holy Ghost until the end of time. She is the Church of the Bible. Read and be convinced; and if you wish to live with Christ

in eternity, abide with His Immaculate Spouse,
the Catholic Church, on earth.

✠ CAMILLUS P. MAES,
Bishop of Covington.

Covington, Ky., March 6, 1912.

THE AUTHOR TO HIS READERS

THE task I proposed to myself in writing this work on "The Catholic Church the True Church of the Bible," is completed.

There remains for me but to add a few sentences of farewell to those who may read the book, to be prefixed, according to custom, to it.

The teaching of the Apostle expresses my purpose in writing this book: "For what things soever were written, were written for our learning; that through patience and the comfort of the Scriptures, we might have hope." (Rom. xv, 4.)

I undertook the work, in all charity for Catholics and Protestants.

For the former, its object is to offer them a means whereby they may be the better able to give an account of the faith that is in them; for the latter, its aim is to enable them to see the true relationship that exists between the Catholic Church and the Bible.

Catholics are not a little inclined to leave to their venerable bishops and priests the missionary labor that is incumbent on all, pursuant to each one's sphere in life, in our great republic.

We need an educated laity as well as we require an erudite and learned clergy.

Hence every Catholic, whose means will justify it, should deem it both a duty and a privilege to procure every book written by a Catholic author, that will open up to him a wider field of information anent his holy religion.

Besides the advantage to himself, it would tend to stimulate Catholic writers, for the demand in literature, as in all things else, creates a supply.

Indifference upon the part of Catholics towards wholesome Catholic literature is the bane of our Catholic population. In few places, if any, throughout all Christendom, are Catholics more loyal to their religion, or more self-sacrificing for it, at least in a pecuniary way, than in our own country. In this regard we have but words of praise for them. Everywhere throughout the land are to be found evidences of their munificence towards the material upbuilding of the Church. On all sides are to be seen splendid results of their liberality. Yet there remains the fact, that their neglect in respect of Catholic books, Catholic journals and Catholic literature generally is conspicuous and to be regretted. "Not in bread alone doth man live, but in every word that proceedeth from the mouth of God." (Matt. iv, 4.) Our magnificent structures, while

wholly proper for the place where the glory of God dwelleth, do not suffice; we must possess that which will impart potency and life to them, a learned virile catholicity. Let us take heed, while yet there is time, that the fate of Solomon's far-famed temple of Jerusalem and the lot of the people of Israel become not our portion. The beauty and glory of that temple are forever gone, the religion of the great Jehovah is no longer with that people, because from them departed the word of God.

Our Catholics may fail at times in doing the proper thing at the right time, but they are amenable to reason and when convinced that they should act otherwise than they do, to their credit be it said, they at once labor to remedy their mistake.

We need to know the Bible better; to know that it is ours; that to the Catholic Church we owe the gathering together into one Book of the different writings of the New Testament; that to the loving care and arduous work of the monks and scholars of the Catholic Church, we are indebted for the multiplication and distribution of the Bible among the people, and that the preservation of the "Book of books" is entirely due to them.

The Church has never objected to the reading of the Scriptures, nor has she ever considered

their perusal as blameworthy; she encourages and has always encouraged the proper use of the Bible, but she vigorously opposes its abuse.

The greatest men of the Church, her men of faith, of a profound spiritual life, her heroes, have, for the most part, been those who studied and expounded the Scriptures.

Nowhere is there to be found greater vigor or more robust life than in the study of the inspired volume. For what word of man can compare with the word of God? The Catholic who desires to know God more, to love and serve Him as He deserves and to be more faithful to his Church, should reverently con the Scriptures and apply himself with zeal to the study of whatever may throw light on them or enable him to obtain a better comprehension of them.

Let Catholics drink, at the fountain of that knowledge which ennobles, those refreshing draughts of healthful, energetic faith, or solid, enduring devotion.

Let them quaff daily of that source of life which emanates from the Holy Ghost himself, that they may be capable of heroic, Christ-like deeds. The study of the Scriptures will be a potent means in their hands of enlightening their faith and of rendering vigorous their whole religious life. They will become earnest, competent champions of their holy religion.

To my non-Catholic readers I give the assurance that they will find in these pages that the teaching of the Catholic Church in regard to the Holy Scriptures has been egregiously misrepresented by her enemies. They will learn that the Bible is in our possession to-day solely through her fostering care of it; that she does not oppose but approves, and always has approved, the reading of Scripture; that she holds it to be a divinely inspired book, profitable to lead all who read it, in the light of the Christian faith, of "the faith once delivered to the saints," to be perfect followers of the Divine Founder of Christianity.

They will come to understand that the original revelation of eternal truths was not made to man by writing, but that it was given by God Himself to those who transmitted it to others.

The true religion was known before the Bible was ever dreamed of.

It will be apparent that the Holy Scriptures, if read without reference to the tradition by which the word of God was communicated to men and nations, must necessarily lead to discord and to every imaginable error.

In support of the foregoing statement I beg leave to insert here what a non-Catholic writer, Stephen Colwell, of Philadelphia, writes in his book entitled, "New Themes for the Protestant Clergy." "Spiritual arrogance is not rare

among Protestants. We are right and you are wrong, are assertions dealt out with unsparing frequency and energy.

"From the era of the Reformation until the present time, the question has still been, What is the true doctrine? What shall we believe?

"The theology of the Reformation is a form of Christianity with charity left out.

"Scores of churches surround us, mutually repelling and attacking each other, and affording a scene of strife, jealousy, animosity and evil speaking, with scarce a parallel for virulence in the proceedings of those who profess no fellowship with Christ.

"Each of those various sects claim in terms the most unqualified, that they only are right; no claim of infallibility is stronger than that they arrogate. Some differ as wide as terms can separate them; yet the bitterness of division only increases with the less it has to fasten upon.

"But while this sectarianism is thus a spectacle to the world, it is eclipsed by the internal feuds to which these sects are themselves exposed.

"Many of them have been convulsed to their centers or blown asunder by explosions of strife and evil passions, which were a disgrace to civilization, let alone Christianity.

"Christianity is smothered in theology and criticism: the truths of revelation are wire-drawn

and spun, and twisted into the most fantastic shapes human fancy or human logic can devise." (Catholicity and Protestantism by T. L. Nichols, p. 342.)

The paramount cause of the truth of the above declarations is due to the "open Bible"; the free individual interpretation of the Scriptures; the study of the inspired Volume, with no account taken of tradition, which was the primal medium by which divine revelation reached men and nations.

It is therefore obvious that the only possible way whereby such deplorable conditions may be averted and the union and charity exist, among all, for which Jesus prayed: "Holy Father, keep them in thy name, whom thou has given me, that they may be one, as we also are. And not for them only do I pray, but for those also who through their own word shall believe in me, that they all may be one, as thou, Father, in me and I in thee, that they also may be one in us; that the world may believe that thou hast sent me" (John xvii, 11-20), is to accept the meaning of the word of God in the Bible as given to us by the one appointed by Jesus Christ and taught and guided by the Holy Ghost, the Church of the living God.

"Upon this Rock I will build my Church." (Matt. xvi, 18.) "And if he will not hear the

Church, let him be to thee as the heathen and the publican.” (Matt. xviii, 17.)

“The Church of the living God, the pillar and ground of truth.” (I Tim. iii, 15.)

These truths of the Holy Scriptures are found verified nowhere save in the Catholic Church.

In her all the members agree in one faith, all in one communion and all under one head. To her in the persons of the Apostles did Jesus Christ say: “The Paraclete, the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring all things to your mind, whatsoever I shall have said to you.” (John xvi, 26.)

To all, therefore, both Catholic and Protestant, I say with the Apostle: “Now the God of patience and of comfort, grant you to be of one mind one towards another, according to Jesus Christ: That with one mind, and with one mouth, you may glorify God and the Father of Our Lord Jesus Christ.” (Rom. xv, 5, 6.).

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THE CATHOLIC CHURCH THE TRUE CHURCH OF THE BIBLE

CHAPTER I

WHOSE IS THE BIBLE?

THE Bible is, par excellence, the Book of books. It is a remarkable, a surpassingly beautiful work. The Bible is of peculiar interest to the antiquary, the historian, the litterateur, the moralist.

Its merits, from whatever view-point you choose to study it, are exceedingly great. For sublime poetical effusions, bursts of eloquence, exquisite pathos and power of expression, it surpasses all other literary productions.

The Bible is quite a large volume, albeit, similar to many wondrous things, it had its small beginnings.

Like many other great works whose beginnings were of little prominence, the Bible was at first only a scroll. Its origin dates back thousands of years.

In those ages long passed away, there were no writings in book form, such as we have now. It was customary in those days to write on papyrus.

2 *The Catholic Church the True Church*

rus or substitutes of a kindred character. Had we lived in the early ages and had we desired to procure a Bible, a small roll of papyrus, containing its first five books, would have been placed in our hands.

The Pentateuch, in its day, constituted all there was of the Bible. Later on, other books, composed by different writers, under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, increased the number of the Scriptural writings.

Many hundreds of years intervened between the appearance of the first and the last book of this marvelous tome.

Properly speaking, the Bible is not one book, but a collection of many books, written by a number of authors, at separate and far remote periods of time.

This fact stands out clearly, when you take into consideration that Moses, who wrote the first five books of the Scriptures, lived some fifteen hundred years before the birth of Christ, while St. John, who wrote the Apocalypse, or last book of the Bible, died one hundred years after the coming of the Messiah.

The Holy Scriptures are therefore made up of books that differ, as to the time wherein they were written, by more than a thousand years.

For fifteen hundred years before the advent of the Savior, that portion of the Scriptures known

as the Old Testament was in the keeping of the Jews, who were God's people among the nations. They were the appointed custodians of His holy Book, and their priests its acknowledged expounders. They prized it highly, guarded it jealously and held to it as to their very life.

All the writings of the Old Testament proceed from God through believers and are addressed to believers and presuppose the Jewish faith as already known.

The Jews, having rejected the Christ, who was born from among them, and having refused to accept the teachings He brought down from heaven, forfeited their claim to be God's chosen people, and their rejection as such carried with it the loss of the further custodianship of the word of God.

Both blessings were henceforth bestowed upon another people, on that of Christ's kingdom on earth, the Catholic Church. She is now the guardian of His divine word. She became the depository of that part of the Bible written before the date of her foundation and of those additional books that go to make up the whole Bible, and which were written by Christian Evangelists and Apostles and are addressed to believers in the Christian faith, and, though inspired writings, they presuppose the faith to have been already revealed and received.

4 *The Catholic Church the True Church*

The Scriptures are for believers, not for unbelievers. They are for those who, up to a certain point at least, have some knowledge of the teachings of the Gospel.

Every truth that has come down from heaven, whether written or unwritten, belongs to the Church. The Bible is hers, and she has kept it with all the sacredness due the divine deposit, just as it was committed to her care. She received it and brought it down through the centuries as linked to her own existence. That the Holy Scriptures are her property is strikingly manifest, and will appear still more evident from the contrast that exists, as we shall now exhibit, between her watchfulness over it and the manner in which all other denominations, of whatever hue or kind, treat it.

In the days of the great and wise King Solomon, two women claimed to be the mother of the same child. To determine which one was the real mother, they were summoned to come before the king, who was asked to adjudicate their contention.

Having heard both parties, Solomon gave peremptory instructions that the child be brought before him, that it be cleft in twain, and that an equal part be allotted to each of the rival claimants.

While one of the women complacently ac-

quiesced in his decision, the other, falling on her knees before the king, pleaded with him, while burning tears coursed down her blanched face, to spare the life of the infant, and commit it to the other contestant.

Influenced by the action of the two women toward the child, Solomon straightway decided that she who would rather have the child live than be bisected was the real mother, and commanded that it be given to her.

In determining whose is the Bible, we may liken the conduct of those outside the Church and of those within her pale to that of those women who sought possession of the child:

From the manner in which those who are not of the household of the Faith deal with it, and from the way those of the fold of Christ look after it, we may see which have the proper regard for the word of God as contained in the inspired volume, and thus determine the rightful owner of the Bible.

The Catholic Church from the beginning gathered together the various parts of the precious book and authoritatively declared what writings should be received as divinely inspired. She arranged and confirmed the Canon of the Holy Scriptures. The work done by her sons in the early ages to preserve it to posterity seems almost superhuman.

6 *The Catholic Church the True Church*

Take a look into those ancient monasteries of religious men who devoted themselves, in holy religion, to the service of God, and behold to what arduous labor numbers of them were given for years, yea, for a lifetime.

They are found busily engaged, in the quiet of their monastic retreat, transcribing and multiplying copies of the Bible. In many instances the work was done in letters of gold on the rarest and richest of parchment. Numbers of copies made by the monks were beautifully enriched with characters superbly delineated and with illustrated designs of the most delicate coloring.

The coverings were profusely inlaid with gold and silver and many of them were embellished with precious stones of great value. No pen-work of to-day can be found that will even approach the elegance and beauty of the work of those religious copyists of the Bible. The copies that escaped the greed of sacrilegious plunderers, who came into the possession of great sums of money in rifling the monasteries, especially in despoiling the Bibles of their valuables, are gems, real works of art and beyond valuation.

The Church has left no stone unturned in her efforts to save the Bible from absolute annihilation. She has spared no pains to have her children pay the highest possible reverence to it. Her works of devotion, her prayer books, her

liturgy, are in great part made up of excerpts from it.

The Holy Sacrifice of the mass, her chief religious service, is intimately connected with it. Her writers on moral or dogmatic subjects draw extensively from the Holy Bible.

Those who prosecute their studies for the sacred ministry are required to apply themselves daily, throughout their entire curriculum, to the study of the Holy Scriptures. It continues to be one of the principal studies of their life, as they make use of it in their instructions, their sermons and in their numerous writings.

The most learned professors are elected to teach and expound the Bible. The clergy are required, under grave responsibility, to recite portions of it each day in the divine office. In monasteries, convents and certain other religious houses, parts of it are said each day by the inmates when chanting the praises of God.

Innumerable books have been written by Catholic authors that treat exclusively of the Bible. There are few questions that come under discussion, on theological subjects, wherein it is not largely quoted from by Catholic writers. Our catechists, teachers and missionaries refer to it, and cite passage after passage from it when instructing those under their charge.

The Bible is the basis of all true education.

Portions of it are read each Sunday to the assembled congregations of the faithful by their respective pastors, and commented on by them. The people are encouraged to have a copy of it, to peruse it often, and to pay it at all times especial reverence.

So dear is the Bible to the great heart of the Catholic Church that she would rather submit to any amount of opprobrium or undergo bitter persecution than have one word of it changed or blotted out from its pages. She holds to every syllable of the sacred volume as tenaciously as the vine clings to the gnarled oak of the forest.

Where, may I ask, will you find this Book of books held in higher regard or treated with more genuine respect than in the Catholic Church? She and she alone has, with a mother's loving care, surrounded it with unceasing vigilance in order to save it, so far as lies in her power, from ill-use, contempt, mutilation or entire loss. She has shielded it from shameful abuses, to which, as we will now disclose, it has been wantonly subjected by those without her fold.

In the face of such an array of undeniable facts, we are yet stoutly told that the Catholic Church is not favorable, but rather inimical to the Bible. They tell us that she hedges it round with laws that all but forbid her people to possess or read it.

If you lend your ears to what is said of her by her inveterate foes, you must believe that only those who are outside her communion and who wage a never-ending warfare against her have due respect for the Holy Scriptures. But put away mere declamation, discard all bluster, cast aside false pretenses, turn to well authenticated facts, and you will be forced to admit the very opposite of what her maligners would have you believe.

We have adduced facts covering twenty centuries, showing the devotion of the Catholic Church to the Holy Scriptures. Let us now take a survey of how her traducers have dealt with it.

Through the fitful zeal of Bible societies, of which there are not a few, and non-Catholic missionaries among the heathen nations, the Bible has been handed over to base, sordid uses. In proof whereof we read on page twenty of Marshall's "Christian Missions," these words of Archdeacon Grant's: "The causes of the eagerness, which has sometimes been evinced, to obtain the sacred volume cannot be traced to a thirst for the word of life, but to the secular purposes, the unhallowed uses, to which the holy word of God, left in their hands, has been turned, and which are absolutely shocking to any Christian feeling."

"They have been seen," says Dr. Wells Wil-

liams, a Protestant agent, "on the counters of shops in Macao, cut in two for wrapping up medicines and fruit, which the shopman would not do with the worst of his own books." (Marshall's Christian Missions, p. 36.)

"The number of books is fabulous," says Bishop Courvezy, a prelate well known to English travelers in the Indian Archipelago, "but the use to which they are applied is very different from that which they were intended to serve. At Singapore, I saw the walls of two houses entirely covered over with leaves of the Bible; this profanation, however, is not greater than when they are employed to wrap around tobacco and bacon." (Marshall's Christian Missions, p. 36.)

What other usage could the Holy Scriptures receive at the hands of illiterate persons, who could not read a word of them, still less understand them?

On page one hundred and twenty-four of Cardinal Wiseman's "Doctrine of the Church," he says, "We are assured, on good authority, that a version of the Bible was sent among the Tartars of the Caucasus, supposed to be in their own language; but it was so written that they did not understand a word of it; and the consequence was, that the books were torn into pieces, and made use of as wadding for their guns."

The Chevalier Gamba observes that, "at As-

tracan, a great number of Bibles were sent out to convert the natives, but as most of them could not read, of course they could not make the slightest use of the present, so that it was completely thrown away."

Those among the heathens who were intelligent or learned enough to read could do no more toward understanding the Scriptures, as put into their hands, than those who had no education. The versions of the Bible were mere jargons, unintelligible translations.

On page twenty-one of Marshall's works, we are told that M. Baucho writes from Pulo Pinang: "I have myself interrogated many intelligent heathens as to the use which they made of the Bibles distributed to them. They have invariably replied, they employ them for ignoble purposes." He adds that they were equally unanimous in declaring that, "all these Bibles are translated into so barbarous and unintelligible a style, that, far from presenting the Christian religion in an attractive form, they are only suited to repel and disgust those amongst the heathen who felt some inclination to embrace it."

Those versions were made by persons who knew but very imperfectly, if at all, the language, so that the heathen took them to be nothing more than works of magic, so meaningless were they to him. "Abbé Dubois," writes Cardinal Wise-

man on page one hundred and seventy of his "Doctrine," "has related an amusing anecdote, concerning the Telings version of St. Matthew's Gospel, which a deputation of native Catholics laid in grave silence at his feet. It had been received from a Protestant missionary, and had proved the utter perplexity of several villages, the readers of which, assembled in council, had not been able to comprehend a syllable of it. They had at length taken it to an eminent astrologer in the neighborhood, who having studied it to no purpose and wishing to conceal his ignorance, seriously assured them that the work was a complete treatise on magic, and must be destroyed, lest some calamity befall them. And they had now accordingly brought it in a bag to their priest, to know how they might best dispose of it."

Thousands on thousands, cargo after cargo of Bibles are shipped to those people, who know not even the alphabet of Christianity.

Instead of being a help to promote religion, or to enkindle in their hearts a love for the teachings of the Divine Master, such literature proves rather a stumbling block to both.

The wholesale distribution of distorted, worthless versions of the Bible turns the heathen against everything Christian, making it exceedingly hazardous for the true ambassador of

Christ to preach the Gospel to those who sit in darkness.

It is no easy task for those benighted people to separate the chaff from the wheat, to discern between the false and the true teachers of Christianity by any such criterion. It does not take a particularly keen mind to detect the shallowness of such a system, or to discover how unseemly must be the creed that is proffered under such a tattered and illiterate garb. It is a Babel of tongues, a jargon of languages, a collection of unintelligible writings, presenting a doctrine they are asked to accept as divine.

Cases and bales of Bibles are sent abroad, stored away in warehouses and finally fall into the hands of persons who desecrate them. They are sold at auction and bought up by manufacturers, principally by the makers of slippers, who use them for linings.

What a degrading, what a shameful use is thus made of the word of God!

On page twenty-two of Marshall's book, we note that the director of the Chinese Seminary at Pulo Pinang says: "I have myself heard a Chinese declare that he was very grateful to the Bible Society for supplying him with paper for a use I dare not name, and he assured me that this was the ordinary fate of the Bibles which were distributed to the Chinese."

But how has the Bible fared even among cultured nations, among those outside the Catholic Church, who profess a belief in Christianity? While not subjected to the same menial uses, it is made to teach doctrines that are totally at variance with the truth. Each sect claims to find the reason of its existence in the Scriptures.

Parts of these are interpreted in contradictory senses, while other portions are discarded, and things entirely foreign to the word of God are interpolated into them. The pagans themselves are quick to note such glaring discrepancies, such contradictory doctrines. They are amazed that Christians do not recognize the failure and the unreasonableness of a book, held as divine, that gives rise to a thousand different conflicting creeds. Certain it is that the Bible has not only been misunderstood, but grossly perverted and forced out of its true sense. In confirmation of this, we need but call to mind the numerous divided sectaries who by their misuse of the Bible would have long ago relegated it to oblivion or buried it midst the ruins of all things human, were it not for the Catholic Church.

She, by her living, infallible voice, safeguards the Bible in declaring what is and what is not of divine truth. Without her unerring teaching, we should drift aimlessly into ever-increasing errors, as do those without her fold, who have not the

guidance of the Holy Spirit to teach them the way and the truth.

Whose is the Bible? The accumulated testimony of twenty centuries hold up clearly to view who has and who has not given to the inspired book the respect due it. The history of those hundreds of years tells the story of the Bible in no uncertain language. It relates how the non-Catholic world has subjected it to the varying whims and fashions of man's fickleness and perversity, whilst the Catholic Church has consecrated all her vast resources to have the Bible held sacred.

History shows the former subjecting the word of God to abuse, ridicule, mutilation, and unmentionable uses; but the latter is put in evidence as the only one that gives to the divine word the honor and reverence it deserves, shielding it from all wanton abuse. No one with eyes to see and ears to hear can go astray in determining whose is the Bible.

CHAPTER II

THE CHURCH AND THE BIBLE

THE deeds of men rather than their words are the criterions whereby they are judged. "By their fruits you shall know them." Our acts more than our speech disclose the principle which actuates us. "Not every one that saith to me, Lord, Lord, shall enter the kingdom of heaven; but he that doth the will of my Father, who is in heaven, he shall enter into the kingdom of heaven."

In these words, Divine Wisdom emphasizes the fact that our actions avail where our asseverations fail us, that our works and not our discourse establish the righteousness of our life or the truth of what we assert.

Hence the constant vigilance of the Catholic Church in safeguarding the Bible against any and all abuse indicates more decidedly her unswerving devotion to the Sacred Scriptures than volumes of printed, shadowy statements could possibly do to influence men to believe her inimical to them. Strenuous have been her efforts to keep

the Holy Book intact. Apace with the battle for her own life has been her struggle for the preservation of the Scriptures.

It is said she is opposed to her people reading the Bible. What she has done in the past and still continues to do to place the Sacred Volume in their hands stoutly contradicts this assertion, which is made maliciously or unwittingly by very many of her enemies. .

To what purpose should she have striven from the first safely to treasure up the Sacred Writings, if she were unwilling for her children to have them? Why did she not consign them to oblivion, as for centuries she had it in her power to do, if her design was to withhold them from the faithful? The preservation or annihilation of the Bible lay for ages exclusively in her hands.

To care for the Bible as she has would be suicidal in her, a flagrant contradiction of the wonderful human wisdom and sagacity with which her adversaries credit her.

Balked in their efforts to make good their contention in this regard, we are told by her opponents that the Church is, at least, violently averse to the free circulation of the Bible, lest, perchance, the glaring discrepancies which, her opponents claim, exist between the written word of God and her teachings, become apparent and she be thereby forever confounded. But little re-

flection is needed to exonerate the Church from such a base slander.

On the one hand, she teaches that the Scriptures are divinely inspired; on the other, she holds that her teachings are truth that have come down from heaven, and on this ground only does she command her children to accept them and to believe in them. She knows full well that in God there is no contradiction. Professing both to be the word of the Almighty, there is no reason why she should fear the detection of differences between them; on the contrary, the stand she takes is a positive guarantee that she has the fullest assurance that His word and her teaching must stand or fall together.

She can, therefore, have no such motive as that of which she is accused for withholding the Bible from the multitude, or for not wishing it to circulate freely among them. Firm in the conviction that there is no discrepancy between the Bible and her doctrines, she can apprehend no antagonism between them.

Should the Church place an embargo on the free circulation of the Scriptures, her prohibition could not arise from any such cause, but from a far different one, which must redound rather to her honor than to her discomfiture.

Her office is to protect the unlearned, the speculative and the vacillating from turning the Scrip-

tures to their ruin, a consequence which necessarily follows from the distorted glosses made by her enemies.

While she safeguards her children against erroneous versions of the Bible, she makes no objection to its free circulation in the original, or in the Latin Vulgate. Whenever she finds translations that do not correspond with the original, or which are made from a falsified text, she forbids their use, because they tend to, and in very truth do, lead astray those who read them. For upwards of fourteen centuries before the so-called reformation, the faithful children of the Church possessed and assiduously perused the Bible without discovering the slightest contradiction between it and that which their faith taught them to believe.

Her position in regard to the Sacred Volume has been sadly misunderstood and grossly misrepresented. They tell us that the Church legislates against the free circulation of the Bible. Is it true? What are the facts? Nowhere, in any period of her long existence, can it be found that she has placed any obstacle in the way of the spread of the real Bible, the Bible in the original, or a version faithful to it.

True, there is a restriction on unauthorized translations in Latin or unapproved versions in the vernacular. This is necessary for many

good reasons, mainly because those versions or translations are either unfaithful to the original, or made from a corrupt text and do not represent the written word of God but are hurtful to the faith and consciences of their readers.

On the versions that have her approval, there is no prohibition save in a few exceptional individual cases and this for some grave personal cause. Origen (in Cant. Cant., Prol. t. iii, p. 26) and St. Jerome (Prol. in Jerem., t. o., p. 3) speak in commendation of the rule prevailing amongst the Jews, that certain portions of the Scriptures, the beginning of Genesis, the Canticle of Canticles, should be forbidden to all under thirty, and Gregory Nazianzen avers that a similar rule ought to prevail amongst Christians, curtailing promiscuous Scripture-reading (Orat. xxxii, N. 32, ii, N. p. 48).

Whatever bar is placed on the Scriptures is designed to bring them within the rule of discipline and to have them subject to the wisdom of those who are especially charged with the care of souls.

Thus St. Augustine discourses on the independent universal reading of the Bible: "They are deceived by many and manifold obscurities and ambiguities who read rashly, mistaking one thing for another, and what they wrongly look for in certain places they find not, to such an extent do

certain obscure sayings involve in deepest darkness." (De Doct. Christ., lib. ii, C. C. t. pars. i Col. 21.)

The version approved by the prelates in any part of the Universal Church circulates as freely among Catholics as does the version authorized by King James of England and Scotland among English-speaking Protestants.

The story of Luther and the Bible which he claims one day to have discovered in the convent library, is too incredible for any sane person to consider seriously.

A greater myth cannot be found, I dare say, in history, than that Martin Luther first gave to the world a Bible printed in the vernacular, which for him was the German language.

Luther was born in the year 1483. His German Bible came from the press only in the year 1530. Prior to this date a very large number of editions of the Bible in the various languages spoken by the different people throughout Europe had been published.

Even before Wickliffe's day, there were in Germany several versions in the vernacular, one of which, made through the good services of Charlemagne, produced splendid results without the aid of the printing press, down to the fourteenth century. This harmonizes with all the efforts of the Church to preserve the Scriptures

and give to them a circulation commensurate with her world-wide propaganda among the nations. In the eighth century, we find Bishop Aldhelm and the Venerable Bede; in the tenth, Alfred the Great and his Bishops, and Alfric with other bishops in the ages following, one and all making strenuous endeavors to circulate the Scriptures through the medium of Anglo-Saxon and English translations.

“From the Anglo-Saxon age down to Wickliffe,” says Sir Francis Palgrave, “we in England can show such a succession of Biblical versions, in metre and prose, as are not to be equalled amongst any other nation of Europe. But we have not produced our stores; nay, though the greater part of these versions are in the libraries of the University of Oxford, I regret to say that they remain to this hour utterly neglected and mouldering on their shelves.” (History of England 175.) Archbishop Ussher informs us of a translation made in 1210, seven editions of which appeared before the time of Luther. In 1290 the whole Bible was translated into English and some twenty years anterior to Wickliffe, John of Trevisa brought out an English translation. Following the invention of the art of printing, we find as early as the year 1466 a German translation from the Latin Vulgate which was published at Leipsic. Copies of this translation are even now

in the Leipsic library, and this same version, long before Luther's translation of the Bible saw the light of day, had passed through sixteen editions; one was gotten out at Strassburg, five at Nuremberg, and ten at Augsburg. Le Long, whose authority cannot well be called in question, assures us that four other editions must be added to these.

In Italy, before the appearance of Wickliffe's translation, there was one in Italian, made by the Archbishop of Genoa, which had a wide circulation. Nicholas Malermi, a monk, published a translation, some time before Luther, in Rome and Venice, many editions of which were issued prior to the defection of the German heresiarch. Maitland, a Protestant historian, in his work on the Dark Ages, writes that hundreds of Latin versions existed before the Reformation; and a translation into French executed by Des Moulins, according to the Protestant Archbishop Ussher, came out about the year 1478.

In Le Long (*Bibliotheca Sacra*, vol. I, p. 369) we are informed that the first translation of the Bible was made into the French (?) vernacular in the twelfth century. A Spanish version came from the press at Valencia in the year 1478, long before Luther began his career, and that too, according to Le Long and Amat, through the instrumentality of the Valencian Inquisitors.

"At this period," continues Le Long, "the remaining Spanish provinces had, almost all of them, translations of the Scriptures in their several dialects."

In the year 1517, Cardinal Ximenes edited a splendid polyglot, of which the historian Prescott writes: "It is a noble monument of piety, learning and munificence, which entitles its author to the gratitude of the whole Christian world." (*History of the Reign of Ferdinand and Isabella the Catholic.*)

St. Hedwig, Duchess of Lithuania, had a translation of the Bible made into the vernacular in Poland in the fourteenth century, and following hers was another by Andrew Jassovitz. In Sweden, St. Bridget early in the same century had a translation published. Blessed Thomas More has observed that, "the Holy Bible was long before Wickliffe's day by virtuous and well-learned men translated into the English tongue, and by good and godly people, with devotion and solemnness well and reverently read." (A "dialogue concerning heresies," B. iii, c. 14, p. 232 [More]).

The Church requires that every translation in the vernacular be faithful to the original and that explanatory footnotes of the more difficult passages be appended. This is the part of prudence in order to prevent false meanings from being

introduced into the Scriptures. The explanations she demands may be likened to the sign posts which are found upon many roads, in that they point out to the reader the true sense of the word of God. The difficulty and obscurity of certain texts, even in the original, are shown by the writings of no less an authority than St. Peter himself. They are necessarily increased when the Bible is translated into the vernacular. It is therefore most fitting that the Church should see to it that her children be not led into error by corrupt versions, but that she secure to them authentic translations, especially of such parts of Holy Scripture as they might otherwise wrest to their own destruction. Knowing that human perversity tends to change the spirit as well as the letter of the Holy Book, she takes particular pains to thwart such an evil. She is unwilling to allow the ungodly to mutilate the sacred deposit which she has received for safe keeping from her Divine Founder.

While no decree was ever issued by the Church forbidding the reading of Sacred Scripture in the original; what can be said about the free use of translations?

There are translations and translations; some are accurate, true renderings of the original; others are inexact, oftentimes misleading and wide apart from the text of the language in

which the Scriptures were written. Concerning the former there is no prohibition. As for the latter, to safeguard her children against false teachings, the Church is in duty bound to exclude all garbled translations as dangerous. She does not object to the reading of the real Bible; but she does prohibit the use of garbled translations.

In examining ecclesiastical enactments in regard to the use of the Scriptures in the vernacular, it will be found that these laws are framed, not to forbid the reading of the Bible, but to exclude inaccurate versions that tend to lead into error rather than give a true knowledge of the word of God.

These laws, as a historic fact, were enacted only when it became manifest that without them designing men would make pernicious use of the Scriptures, as in fact, they were then doing.

It was only when the Bible was being used to corrupt the minds and hearts of men and distort the truth that it became an imperative duty on the part of the Church to speak out and to act. Such regulations were made and promulgated when the Waldenses and the Albigenses in the thirteenth century were injecting false teachings into the Scriptures. Since those days, restrictions have become even more necessary, as every new sect seeks to prove from the Bible its particular form of heresy.

"It is affirmed," writes Disraeli, "that one Bible swarmed with 6000 faults. From another source we discover that Sterne, a solid scholar, was the first who summed up 3000 faults that were in our printed Bibles of London." "In Bibles, by Field and Hills we may find abundant errata, reducing the text to nonsense or to blasphemy, making the Scriptures contemptible to the multitude who come to pray and not to scoff" (*Disraeli's Curiosities of Literature*, p. 430, 431).

The use to which the sacred volume was put by those who got possession of it called forth the indignation of Henry VIII. In his last speech to Parliament he is reported to have said: "The Bible itself is turned into wretched rhymes, sung and jingled in every ale house and tavern. Yet I am sure that charity was never so faint among ye, virtue at so low an ebb, and God Himself never less honored or worse served in Christendom" (*Collier's Ecc. Hist.*, Part II, Book III, p. 218). St. Vincent of Lerins (A. D. 456) observed very pertinently: Some, perhaps, may ask, what need is there to join to Holy Scripture the authority of ecclesiastical interpretation? He answers: "The reason is that the Scripture being of itself so deep and profound, all men do not understand it in one and the same sense, but diverse men diversely; this man and that man, this way and that way, ex-

pound and interpret the sayings thereof, so that to one's thinking, so many men, so many opinions, also may be gathered out of it . . . and therefore it is most necessary, because of the vagaries of errors so various, that the line of expounding the Prophets and Apostles be drawn according to the rule of the ecclesiastical and Catholic sense." (Commonitorium, chapter ii.)

If this great Saint so expressed himself in the fifth century, what would he say, were he writing in the twentieth, when sects have so multiplied? Common sense, the Scriptures and experience all clearly show the wisdom of the Catholic Church in surrounding the Bible with the safeguards she does, to preserve it, and to protect it against the wanton abuses to which it is daily subjected.

Capital is sometimes made of the Bible being chained in some secure place, and this, it is claimed, was done to prevent it from circulating among the people. But suppose you enter a place of business and ask to see the city directory, and you find that it is safely fastened to one of the pillars, doors, or desks in the establishment; would you for a moment look on this as an effort to hide it, or would you not rather consider such action a wise precaution to keep it from being removed or stolen? When we discover that, in the days of our forefathers in the Faith, the Scriptures were found chained in certain places, are

we not justified in ascribing this to a desire upon the part of the Church to preserve the Bible from desecration and to extend its benefits to the greatest number, especially so when there were necessarily but few copies in existence at the time?

So deep is the reverence of the Catholic Church for the Holy Scriptures, and so true an appreciation has she of its value, that her only restriction on it has been to protect it against abuse and to foil all attempts to turn it into an engine of destruction for souls. Hence she places her ban upon all translations of the Bible not approved by her, and countenances, for obvious reasons, only such as have received her sanction. It is only by the means of her infallible teaching that the integrity of the Scriptures can be maintained.

To the Church we are indebted for the Sacred Scriptures. To the great care and arduous labors of the monks, her loving children, we owe the multiplication and distribution of the Bible among the faithful.

Most unhesitatingly therefore do we avow that the Catholic Church is the savior, guardian, and transmitter of the sacred volume.

CHAPTER III

THE BIBLE NOT THE CHARTER OF THE CHURCH

WERE I to say that the Catholic Church is the only one that holds the Bible to be the inspired and authoritative word of God, I should not be far afield.

When I assert that the Bible is not the charter or act of incorporation of the Church, I am unquestionably within the limits of an incontrovertible dictum.

To doubt that the Church existed for years with her God-given powers before one word of the New Testament was written would be to nullify the best authenticated facts of history. The Scriptures of the New Testament are of themselves ample evidence to prove to the satisfaction of any candid person that they were written long after the Church came from the hands of her Divine Founder and that these very Scriptures were addressed to her, years subsequent to her establishment.

As a logical sequel it is evident that the Church could not be indebted for her foundation to the Scriptures, and consequently that there are no grounds whereon they could be considered as her

act of incorporation. Would you know the charter of the Church, recall the commission which Christ gave His Apostles. "Going therefore, teach ye all nations; and behold I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world." (Matthew xxviii, 19-20.)

For the Catholic Church to vindicate her claim to be the true Church of God, she has as little need to appeal to the Bible as would a man to call upon a stranger to know whether the hand he was pointing at the stranger was his own or that of another person.

To hold differently would be to argue on the hypothesis that the Church has no rights which are not positively granted to her in the Scriptures, whereas she professes to possess all prerogatives and to have exercised them for years prior to the appearance of the Bible, save such as might be forbidden in the written word of God.

Whilst the Church emphatically teaches that the Scriptures are divinely inspired, she is far from conceding that they constitute her charter.

If the Church and the Bible are both from God, as she assures us they are, there can be no discrepancy between them. Nor is there the slightest difference between the two. The written word was communicated to the Church, a fact which clearly establishes her pre-existence to that word. For her to advance anything contrary to

what is in the Scriptures would be to contradict herself,—not that the Bible is above her, but because she holds the written word to be eternal truth.

Though she should teach what is not expressly found in the Scriptures, there would be no cause for censure, so long as her doctrines are in harmony with them.

It is very possible that all of Christ's teachings are not contained in the written word, and furthermore that what is written can be properly understood only by means of what was previously given to the Church without any written medium.

Whenever the Church appeals to the Bible, either for the truth of what she teaches, or to prove her right to teach the truth, it is not to defend herself, but rather for such as do not believe, and who, though unbelievers, look upon the written word as divinely inspired. In this she merely makes use of their own weapons with which to confound them.

The Catholic does not need the Scriptures to have faith in the Church, for he believes in the inspiration of the Bible only because he adheres unwaveringly to her teachings. The Church has given us the Scriptures and is the only voucher for their genuineness and canonicity.

They were given by the Holy Ghost, who is the perpetual guide of the Church. He inspired

the writers of Holy Scripture. He inspired the Church to receive and interpret them. And as "no prophecy of Scripture is of private interpretation" we shall not run the risk of "wresting them, as the unlearned and unstable do, to their own perdition."

The Catholic claims the divine origin, constitution and authority of the Church establish her the living depositary and teacher of the truths of God. For this reason, strangely enough, he is accused of having but scant respect for the Scriptures, while, truth to say, he is about the only one who professes them to be the inspired word of the Holy Ghost. He recognizes their divine authority and shows a corresponding reverence for them. To gainsay that the Holy Scripture is, ever was, or ever was intended to be the charter of the Church, does not argue that the Church refuses to acknowledge it as the word of God's holy spirit or revere its authority as such. On the contrary no one displays greater respect for the Scriptures than does the Church.

It does not follow that in believing that our Lord makes His revelation primarily to His Church, without the help of the written word, and that the Holy Ghost is ever with her to enable her to teach without erring whatever He communicates to her, we do not accept the same

revelation through the written medium when the written word contains it.

Since the Scriptures of the New Testament were not extant at the time the Church was founded by Christ, and cannot therefore be her act of incorporation, at what period of her existence did they first make their appearance?

The New Testament begins with the Gospel of St. Matthew, who was the son of Alpheus, by birth a Galilean, in religion a Jew and by profession a publican. He lived at Capharnaum, but transacted business upon the shores of the Sea of Tiberias.

Here it was that our Savior called him to the Apostleship. When about to take leave of the Jews to carry the light of faith to the Gentiles, he wrote, under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, the history of the life and death of Jesus Christ, his Divine Master.

He gave to his work the name of evangel, or gospel, that is, good news.

According to our best commentators on Holy Scripture, the gospel of St. Matthew was written not earlier than six years after the ascension of Christ.

St. Mark, the second of the Evangelists, was a disciple of St. Peter, who, in his first epistle, refers to him as his son. It is generally believed that St. Mark wrote his gospel in the year

'forty-five of Jesus Christ, or twelve years after His passion and death.

The author of the third book of the New Testament was St. Luke, who according to St. Paul, whose disciple he was, practised medicine as his profession. In his gospel narrative he supplements what St. Matthew and St. Mark wrote, particularly concerning the birth of St. John the Baptist and the infancy of Jesus. Our most reliable authorities tell us that St. Luke wrote his gospel in the year sixty-three of our Lord, or thirty years after the Apostles went forth to teach the nations.

St. John the Evangelist, the last of the four authors of the gospels, and the last of the writers of the New Testament, was the well-beloved disciple of Christ. It was only after public fasts and prayers that he wrote his gospel, about the year sixty-three after the ascension of our Lord. As for the other writings of the New Testament, the Acts of the Apostles, their letters and the last book, the Apocalypse, they were written from twenty to sixty-four years after the Savior had entered into the Kingdom of Heaven.

The above given dates, showing at what time the different books of the New Testament were written, clearly bring out the fact that for at least six years there was no writing of the New Testament, that upwards of sixty-

four years sped by before those writings were completed.

It was at least four hundred years before they were compiled into one book, the Bible, written by hand and universally held to be the written revelation of the New Testament.

This being indubitably true, the question arises, If a charter was to be the source of the knowledge of the teachings of Christ, where was the Church during the four centuries before the many writings of the Scriptures were compiled into one book?

The Church certainly existed for six years before any writing was made, and for sixty-four years before the last book of the Bible was penned by St. John the Evangelist.

It existed for at least four hundred years before those writings were gathered into one book and universally received as a record of divinely revealed truths.

During the long number of years that intervened between the foundation of the Church and the compilation of the Scriptures, the people did not possess them, nor could they obtain them unless they had them transcribed by hand.

Notwithstanding the conditions which surrounded the Scriptures at this period, the Church was an established fact, and through her the doctrines of Christ were taught to, and accepted by the nations.

It is therefore plain that our Lord not only did not write a word of the Bible Himself, but did not even command the Apostles to do so.

No charter in writing was framed by Him. He gave a commission to His Apostles: "Go teach all nations, and lo, I am with you all days, to the consummation of time."

When about to leave those whom He had chosen to bring the light of faith to the nations, He told them that it was necessary for Him to return to the bosom of His Father, that He might send the Paraclete upon them, who would teach them all truth. And unless He did ascend into heaven the Holy Ghost would not come down upon them. Hence on the day of Pentecost, when according to His promise, the Spirit of God came upon them under the form of fiery tongues, He imparted to them what they should know, and from weak, timid and unlearned men, they went forth strong, courageous and full of wisdom, preaching Christ and Him crucified, to Jew and Gentile.

Thus did they fulfill the command of their Divine Master when He bade them to "go teach all nations, and lo, I am with you all days, to the consummation of time."

This was the charter or act of incorporation of the Church, and no written document of any kind can be produced as her act of incorporation.

The Bible is, therefore, not the Charter of the Church.

CHAPTER IV

THE BIBLE FOR CATHOLICITY

THE fact once established and conceded that the Bible contains the revealed word of God, that it was written under the special inspiration of the Holy Ghost who teaches all truth, the correlative fact, that the Bible is for Catholicity and against all other forms of Christianity, necessarily follows. The Catholic Church declares emphatically that the Bible is the written word of God. Ever faithful to this belief she holds that its teachings are to be accepted as divine. The Church venerates the Bible. She pays to it the homage due to the word of God.

In the face of her constant and strenuous efforts in all ages, since her foundation, to safeguard the Bible against all irreverence and abuse, there is, upon the part of her assailants, a combined effort to make it appear that she has little, if any, respect for the Bible. The object of this is to mislead the unsuspecting and have them look upon the Church as the enemy rather than the friend of the Bible.

Ingeniously enough do they go about it. They extol the merits of the Bible, praise its divine

character and would seem to demand the greatest possible reverence for it. At the same time, they make use of every available means to bring reproach on the Church in accusing her, among other misdeeds, of being opposed to the spread of the Bible among the people. By these and other such like subtle methods, they confidently hope to discredit the stand the Church has taken in regard to the Bible and to hold her up as anti-biblical.

They claim for themselves that in following the Bible they are free men, whereas those who accept the word and authority of the Church are no more than groveling slaves.

In proof of this they contend that they have the word and the authority of God in the Bible, but stoutly deny the same to those who are subject to the word and authority of the Church, on the ground that they have only the word of men, who, at times, are unworthy of credence because of their lack of knowledge, their want of virtue or may be of both.

True, indeed, it is that submission to the divine will is the enjoyment of perfect freedom, while obedience to the vacillating will of man rather than to the command of God is abject slavery.

On this principle, which tallies perfectly with the claims of the would-be Bible defenders, a refusal to obey the authority of the Church is a

manifest contradiction. Were it true that in the Church we had only human authority, merely the words of men, we should acknowledge our thrall-dom and consider ourselves under lasting obligations to those who would set us free from such a base spiritual slavery. But what stands in the way, if in the Church we have not the word of man, but the word and authority of God, as we firmly believe and conclusively demonstrate that we have, of our being as free as those who purport to find it in the written word?

For what is the medium through which we receive the written word of God? Is it not man? How, then, according to their own theory, could the Bible be the word of God, since man is the medium through which it comes to us, if God could not in the same manner make known through the Church His truth to us?

If we have the word of God, in the Bible, as they say we have, and we admit, on what ground can we fail to have it through the teachings of the Church, when the medium of God's holy word is the same in both instances?

The answer is apparent, though they give some color of assurance to their contention.

Those who place their faith in the written word only, consider themselves at liberty to believe or reject just what they please in the writings of the Bible, whereas we are bound to hold

strictly to the teachings of the Church, which we acknowledge to be divinely established to teach the word of God, and because of our complete submission to her God-given authority, we are in their judgment mere slaves, albeit in very deed "the truth" of God's word in the Church "hath made us free."

To refuse to believe all the Bible commands us; to champion what we know to be bold opposition to its mandates, is unquestionably to reject the divine word.

This being true according to their own statements, how are they more free than are we, who follow the teachings of the Church?

The authority of the Bible is surely not less binding than that of the Church. If heaven's truth is in the Bible, it will not brook contradiction a whit more than will the authority of the Church. The reformers even, in their day, did not discard the teachings of the Church for the sake of private judgment. They refused obedience to her teachings on the plea that the written word was superior to her.

They were no more disposed to allow the written word to be called into question or gainsaid, than we are to dissent from the authority or commands of the Church.

The motive the present adherents of the written word have in renouncing the Church for the

Bible is that, according to their way of thinking, it sets them free to elect whatever interpretation they choose to give the written word.

The fact is, and sad experience confirms it, that the Bible left to the individual is made to foster an unlimited number of interpretations, the product of a weak, changeable human reason. So wide is the scope they give to what the Bible might be made to teach, that any imaginable view may prevail. Nevertheless such is their theory. But is their practice in keeping with their theory? Far from it. A brief examination of the facts will disclose the gaping discrepancy between the two.

Each sect in dealing with its followers holds as firm a hand over them in regard to its tenets as does the Church over the faithful in regard to her teachings. Unless the members of the great variety of denominations conform to the doctrines of the particular creed to which they belong, they are ingloriously expelled from the membership of that sect, no matter what they themselves individually have found to be the word of God in the Bible. They must obey the word of man and abandon the written word, or the word of God in the Bible.

Can you find anything more than human in such a method? By no means. Hence those who subject themselves to this discipline are verily in bondage. They hold that it is of obligation

to conform to the authority of the Bible, and that the Bible is as positive in its teachings as is the Church in hers. How then can there be for them more room for private judgment than there is for those who adhere to the Church?

To advocate therefore the free or individual interpretation of the Bible precludes the possibility of following it as an unerring source of the truth. No one who admits the Bible to be the written word of God can refuse to accept its true meaning when it is within his power to obtain it. To do otherwise would be to condemn knowingly God's divine word. In seeking what he may choose to call freedom, he gains it, not by submission to the Bible as intended by the Holy Ghost, who inspired it, but in following what his feeble reason fancies or wishes it to be.

He is therefore guided by his own human judgment, grounded for the most part on passion, prejudice or ignorance. Pursuing this line of reasoning he will profess Christianity in a general way, but when there is question of particularizing, he scoffs at it and turns it down.

He has one source of the truth of God, the Bible, though he fails to draw from it its true sense.

His faith, as a consequence, is cloudy, vague, while that of the believer in the authority of the Church is clear, exact. To be sure of the truth

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he must know what the Bible really teaches and what the Church actually holds.

Of himself he has no way of ascertaining what is the true teaching of the written word, and as for his knowledge of the doctrine of the Church, it is practically null.

Whether there is agreement or disagreement between the Bible and the Church, he is at a loss to determine.

It may occur that the Church condemns as reprehensible a teaching he holds as true since he presumes to find it in the Bible. What criterion has he to verify whether he be right or wrong? Is it that the authority of the Bible is less human than that of the Church? No. Both give us the word of God through the same medium. Granting the Bible to be divinely inspired, you must allow, on the same basis, that the Church is divinely established.

When you accept the Bible as the written word of God, it is for you to prove that those who wrote it were moved to do so and were kept from error or mistake by a special assistance of the Holy Ghost.

The same course is to be followed by those who believe in the Church in favor of those who were called to preach the gospel and to plant the Church.

Has God deposited in the Church His Holy

Word? Has He declared that He would abide with her all days to the end of time? Has He promised that the Holy Ghost would teach her all truth?

Yes. He, who can neither deceive nor be deceived, who has announced that heaven and earth will pass away but His word will never pass away, has solemnly promised to do all this. The miraculous existence of the Church 'midst the wrecks of kingdoms, empires and republics; her doctrines the same to-day as yesterday and from the beginning; her world-wide influence in spreading the evangel of Christ, are a living testimony to the fact that Christ Jesus' promises to His Church have been and are being fulfilled in a marvelous way in our own day.

For fourteen hundred years before any one of the numerous sects was even dreamed of, Catholics possessed and read the Bible, yet discovered nothing in it that was in the least adverse to the teachings of the Church. Contrariwise, they always found and still find the Bible in perfect harmony with her, and her with the Bible. The Bible and the Church move along in parallel ways, both being the work of God for the diffusion of His word among the nations.

What therefore can be more logical or clearer than that the Bible is for Catholicity and against all sects.

CHAPTER V

THE BIBLE AND TRADITION

IN the Christian world, which is Christ's Kingdom on earth, there is a true, a divine faith, which is founded upon the word of God that is contained in the Holy Scriptures. These sacred writings are not, however, the only vehicle of the divine word; there is, besides, the unwritten word, the apostolic tradition or simple tradition.

God is not limited to any one mode through which He must make known His eternal truths. His power is not restricted. Whatever means His wisdom chooses to impart His word to us, cannot fail to command the same divine authority. He may elect to speak the word Himself, as He did when He conversed with the first man; He can communicate it through His prophets as He did to the Jewish people. He has around His throne in the heavens ministering angels whom He employs at times to be the bearers of His messages to men. He sent His well beloved Son, Christ Jesus, as a messenger of His word and gave Him power to select whom He would to transmit that word to all the nations of the world.

In the designs of His all-wise Providence He

had the Spirit of Truth, the Holy Ghost, to descend upon those chosen by His Divine Son, to move and inspire them to commit to writing His word and in this manner also have it reach those for whom it was intended. But in whatever way He wishes His eternal word to come to us, it remains always the same divine word. In it no more than in Himself is there change or alteration.

There was no written word of His before the days of Moses. For over two thousand years the faithful received and held steadfastly to the true religion through tradition. So far as we know, the Divine Founder of Christianity had recourse to no other method for establishing and spreading its doctrines than the unwritten word, there being no written word of any kind left by Him.

He taught by the living voice and commanded His Apostles to preach the word of life to all the world.

He did not require of them to commit to writing what He had spoken to them, but He said unto them; "Go ye and teach all nations." "Preach the Gospel to every creature." "He that heareth you heareth me." Following the injunction of their Divine Teacher, the Apostles went forth on their God-given mission, preaching the heavenly truths which He had delivered to them,

for years before one word of the New Testament was written. With the great labor of converting the nations of the world and the colossal accumulation of the works and teachings of Jesus before them, it would have been beyond their power to commit all to writing, as the Holy Scriptures themselves declare in the very last Gospel written by St. John, chapter xxi, verse 25: "But there were many other things which Jesus did; which if they were written every one, the world itself, I think, would not be able to contain the books that should be written." The Bible evidently does not contain all that Christ taught and wrought; far from it. Such was not its purpose.

The living voice was the channel followed by the Savior for the transmission of His word. The Apostles adopted the same course, save five who wrote some things, years after they had begun to preach the gospel, but under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, to meet conditions that called forth the written word.

On this very theme we have a learned dissertation from the pen of one of the best authorities among our non-Catholic writers on Holy Scripture. Dr. Westcott, Bishop of Durham, says ("The Bible in the Church," p. 53, sqq.): "In order to appreciate the Apostolic age in its essential character, it is necessary to dismiss not only the ideas which are drawn from a collected New

Testament, but those also, in a great measure, which spring from the several groups of writings of which it is composed.

"The first work of the Apostles, and that out of which all their other functions grew, was to deliver in living words a personal testimony to the cardinal facts of the gospel, the ministry, the death and the resurrection of our Lord. It was only in the course of time, and under the influence of external circumstances, that they committed their testimony, or any part of it, to writing.

"Their peculiar duty was to preach. That they did, in fact, perform a mission for all ages in perpetuating the tidings which they delivered was due, not to any conscious design which they formed, nor to any definite command which they received, but to that mysterious power." "The repeated experience of many ages has even yet hardly sufficed to show that a permanent record of His words and deeds, open to all, must co-exist with the living body of the Church, if that is to continue in pure and healthy vigor." And again, "The Apostles, when they speak, claim to speak with divine authority, but they nowhere profess to give in writing a system of Christian doctrine."

In the second epistle of St. Paul to the Thessalonians, chapter ii, verse 14, we read: "Therefore, brethren, stand fast; and hold the

traditions which you have learned whether by word or by our epistle." In the third chapter, verse 6, of the same epistle, the Apostle says: "We charge you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you withdraw yourselves from every brother walking disorderly and not according to the tradition which they have received from us." We could not ask for a clearer pronouncement than the one St. Paul here gives us in regard to the solemn obligation of adhering to tradition as firmly as to his written word. The work of paramount importance for the Apostles was to give a personal testimony of the leading facts of the Gospel narrative. For years they taught exclusively by word of mouth. There was no preconceived plan on their part to create anything like a permanent literature. What the writers of the Bible communicated to the faithful by the living voice had not less weight or authority than what in later years, guided by the Holy Spirit, they saw fit to put into writing.

Both are the word of God; both are of divine authority. Many things there are, which have been revealed and are to be believed, even though no mention is made of them in the Holy Scriptures.

Is it not on the authority of tradition, then, that we found our belief in the inspiration by the Holy Ghost of the four Gospels, the fourteen epistles

of St. Paul, the three of St. John and his Apocalypse? On this point all agree. God has revealed the divine inspiration of all the books that go to make up the Bible.

But where are we to find this revelation of God? Certainly not in the Bible itself, since nowhere in it can we find an enumeration of the revealed books that compose it. This being true, we cannot refuse to acknowledge the word of God that is not written, namely, tradition, for the revelation on which our faith is founded and through which we believe the Holy Scriptures to be God's holy word, is a divine revelation which on the confession of the opponents of the Church constitutes the foundation of all the other teachings of our faith. Upon the same ground the Church has consistently held that there is an unwritten word of God. It was this word, the word of the living voice, which the Savior made use of in propounding the truths He brought down from heaven. His Apostles treasured up in their hearts all His words. In keeping with the promise of Christ, the Holy Ghost in due season was to bring all His words to their minds. On the authority of St. John we are assured that many of them were not, nor was it possible that they could be, written, as it would take more books than the world could contain to relate all that Christ said and did.

In the second epistle of St. Paul to Timothy we find in chapter i, verses 13, 14: "Hold the form of sound words which thou hast heard from me in faith, and in the love of Christ Jesus. Keep the good thing committed to thy trust by the Holy Ghost, who dwelleth in us."

In the second chapter, verse 2, of the same epistle, he writes: "The things which thou hast heard from me before many witnesses, the same commend to faithful men, who shall be fit to teach others also." And in the third chapter, verse 14, we read: "But continue thou in those things which thou hast learned, and which have been committed to thee, knowing of whom thou hast learned."

The great Apostle of the Gentiles places upon the same footing the truths he taught by word of mouth and those he committed to writing. Both form the deposit of the faith he charged Timothy to transmit to those who would be competent to teach it to others. There was no difference with him between the written and unwritten word of God. The Scriptures and tradition are, according to the Apostle, of equal importance. In his first epistle to the Corinthians, chapter xi, verse 2, he says: "Now I praise you brethren, that you keep my ordinances as I have delivered them to you." What stronger language could he use to impress upon their minds that the un-

written word or tradition should be received and followed as implicitly as the written word or the Scriptures.

In view of all that St. Paul teaches concerning tradition, to reject it would be tantamount to discarding the entire New Testament, in which we find in no uncertain terms that tradition is an infallible and pure source of the truth of God. What is more, the whole Bible would, for the same reason, have to be received as a mere human work, since it has come down to us by tradition. Yet it would be considered blasphemy to say that the Scriptures are of human origin.

Religion, whether we get it through the written word or the living voice, is the same. Changes in it are no more likely to occur through the one than the other medium. Though there existed no writing of any description, the true religion would subsist and be perpetuated as it was for two thousand years from Adam to Moses. Christianity was propagated for years in the same way. Without a single word of the New Testament, the teachings of Christ found their way to the faithful wherever they chanced to be.

We learn from the teachings of the Apostles that, in order to safeguard the true religion, God had to and did appoint a judge of the written and unwritten word, to put an end to contentions that would arise in regard to it; to determine what

books were to be received as divinely inspired; to pass on the correctness of the versions of the Bible and the meaning of the texts, and to separate divine from human tradition. The judge must be living, speaking, constant and infallible, directed by the Holy Ghost in order to make our faith certain. In St. Peter's second epistle, chapter iii, verses 15-16, he writes: "Our most dear brother Paul, according to the wisdom given him, hath written to you as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which there are some things hard to be understood, which the unlearned and unstable wrest, as also the other Scriptures, to their own perdition." Do not these words of St. Peter, the Vicar of Christ on earth, plainly reveal that the Bible is not easily understood and that it requires a living, constant, infallible interpreter?

In the Acts of the Apostles, chapter viii, v. 30 sq., Philip said to the eunuch, "Understandest thou what thou readest?" and he answered: "How can I, unless some one show me." The Apostles had the promise of Christ, and through them of His Spouse, the Church, for all time, that they would be enlightened by the Spirit of God, the Holy Ghost, who would teach them all truth.

Wherefore St. John tells us in the fourteenth chapter, 26th verse, of his Gospel, that, "The

Paraclete, the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things, and bring all things to your mind, whatsoever I shall have said to you."

St. John in his first epistle, chapter ii, verse 24, has this to say concerning tradition: "Let that which you have heard from the beginning, abide in you; If what you have heard from the beginning shall abide in you, you also shall abide in the Son and in the Father."

Strong, indeed, is the language of the Apostle commanding us to accept and abide by the traditions the Apostles received and transmitted to their successors.

Thousands on thousands became followers of the Crucified through the teachings of tradition. Christ delivered His message by the living voice alone; the Apostles, following His command, preached the word of God to the multitudes, exhorting their hearers to hold fast to the traditions.

The Church, true to its Divine Founder, faithful to the teachings of the Apostles, treasures both the written and the unwritten word of God. The Bible itself commands us to obey the tradition of the Apostles. The Catholic Church therefore is the Church and the only true Church of the Bible, since she alone accepts tradition as the word of God.

CHAPTER VI

THE BIBLE AND THE PRIMACY

THE object of the present chapter is not to give an exhaustive treatise on the primacy, but simply to show that it is scriptural, a teaching of the Bible.

We aim to prove that the Holy Scriptures demand this office in the Church founded by Jesus Christ and that He Himself did in fact create the office and confer its prerogatives on St. Peter and through him on his successors in the Supreme Pontificate, which, upon His own word, is to endure to the end of the world.

The sheepfold has but one shepherd, the beehive one queen, the ship one captain, the army one chief commander. Thus the Church of Christ is one and has but one head, one God, one faith, one baptism. While in God there are three persons, yet there is but one God. Though in the soul there are three powers, the soul is one.

Union gives to heaven its unspeakable delight and order, to the soul sanctity, to the body health,

to the home peace, to a people virtue, strength, and prosperity.

St. Paul, writing to the Ephesians (chapter iv, verses 3, 6), says: "Careful to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace. One body and one spirit; as you are called in one hope of your calling. One Lord, one faith, one baptism. One God and Father of all, who is above all and through all and in us all."

Unity is essential in God, necessary in His Church. In Ezechiel (chapter xxxvii, verse 22), we read: "And I will make them one nation in the land on the mountains of Israel, and one king shall be king over them all, and they shall be no more two nations; neither shall they be divided any more into two kingdoms."

All are united; all are brought back to unity in Jesus Christ, King of kings; the whole Church is one under her King, the Pope of Rome the Vicegerent of Christ on earth.

In Osee (chapter i, verse 11), we read: "And the children of Juda, and the children of Israel shall be gathered together; and they shall appoint themselves one head."

Jews and Greeks, pagans and idolaters, masters and slaves, kings and peoples, will all have for their head Jesus Christ and His Vicar on earth the Pope of Rome.

The Church is one in her invisible head

Christ Jesus, one in her visible head, His representative the Supreme Pontiff. She is one in her teachings, her morals, her sacraments. Christ is the center of her unity. In Him are brought together the old and the new law, the law and the prophets, heaven and earth, God and man. The Chair of St. Peter is the center of Catholicity. The primacy in the Church was given to him by her Divine Founder so that there should be one Chair and one Church.

Among the twelve Apostles one only is chosen, so that one being the confirmed leader, every danger of discord would be eliminated. The Vicar of Christ, the Pope, governs the universe and is the center of a world-wide unity. Whosoever separates himself from that unity cuts himself off from the one Church of Christ, "He who hears you, hears me," says Our Lord.

The Church has never recognized any other invisible head than Jesus Christ and no other supreme visible head than the Pope of Rome. The Roman Pontiffs from St. Peter to Pius X have always been the center of unity, and their successors are destined to be that center till time shall be no more. Do away with this God-given bond of union, and the Church would go the way of all things earthly, because it would be no longer one.

 In the Gospel of St. John (chapter i, verses 41

and 42), he writes: "He findeth first his brother Simon, and saith to him: We have found the Messias, which is, being interpreted, the Christ. And he brought him to Jesus. And Jesus looking upon him said: Thou art Simon, the son of Jona; thou shalt be called Cephas, which is interpreted Peter."

It is generally accepted that Andrew, the brother of Simon Peter, was the elder of the two. On the invitation of Jesus, Andrew followed Him into His retreat and, being well pleased with Our Lord and with all he heard from Him, he was anxious that his brother Simon should meet Jesus also. Seeking Simon, he related to him that he had seen the Messias and had passed the day with Him. He then brought Simon to Jesus. At this first meeting Christ tells Simon that he shall be called Cephas, which is by interpretation Peter. In the Syro-Chaldaic, the Hebrew dialect spoken by our Divine Lord, there is but one word for Peter and rock, Cepha. So that the name of Peter or Cephas, which the Messias told Simon, the brother of Andrew, he would one day be called, signifies rock and is indicative of some particular mission intended for him.

Among the Jews a change of name had a special significance.

On a subsequent occasion, as we read in the Gospel of St. Matthew (chapter xvi, verses 13

and 14), Jesus questions the Apostles about Himself. "And Jesus came into the quarters of Cæsarea Philippi; and He asked His disciples: Whom do men say that the Son of man is? But they said: Some John the Baptist, and some Elias, and others Jeremias or one of the prophets." Diverse answers were given to Him by the Apostles about Himself, corresponding with what they had gleaned among the people with whom they associated. What they said to Him did not satisfy our Lord and He puts the question to themselves: "But whom do you say that I am?" (Matt. xvi, 15.) The Apostles were more conversant with the life and works of their Divine Master. They remained for days at a time with Him, listening to His heavenly teachings. They were His intimate friends and associates.

He therefore would have an expression of their opinion about Himself.

Then it was that Simon Peter answered and said: "Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God." (Matt. xvi, 16.) He acknowledges Jesus to be the Christ, the Son of the living God, far greater than John the Baptist, than Elias, than Jeremias, or one of the Prophets, more in fact than all of them, the God-man, the long promised Messias, who was to redeem the world.

In recognition of this splendid exhibition of

faith and knowledge of Him, Christ bestows on Simon Bar-Jona the name He said on a former occasion would be given to him, for He said: "Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-Jona; because flesh and blood hath not revealed it to thee, but my Father who is in heaven. And I say to thee: that thou art Peter and upon this rock, I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." (Matt. xvi, 17.)

Simon is here told whence comes his knowledge concerning our Lord. It is from God the Father who is in heaven. Since the Father was pleased to reveal the identity of the Christ to Simon, Jesus desired to favor him in a particular manner also, and let him know the excellence, the supreme authority, that were in store for him. I say to you that you are Peter, the rock, and as I am the indestructible rock, you are also the rock which shall be likewise indestructible through Me, so that what is mine naturally will also become yours by virtue of Me.

Both St. Jerome and St. Gregory, commenting on the words of David, who calls Jesus Christ the rock, remark that He gave to St. Peter His name, His dignity and His ministry.

"And the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." The Church is to endure forever, because she is built on the immovable rock, Peter. If the Church is thus firmly established, is not St. Peter

still more so? "The gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Neither the powers of darkness nor the powers of the world will ever be able to destroy the Church or the rock on which it is built. Such is the promise of Christ to St. Peter, and full nineteen centuries bear testimony to its complete fulfillment. Jesus Christ and the Holy Ghost so assist the Roman Pontiff, successor of St. Peter and Vicar of Christ, that he cannot err in matters of faith and morals and that he triumphs over every assault made against the Church by her enemies. "And I will give to thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven." (Matt. xvi, 19.) No doubt can exist in the mind of any candid person in reading these words that by the keys, here alluded to by our Lord, He meant the supreme power of order and jurisdiction over the whole Church, promised and given to St. Peter and his successors and which is more fully comprehended in what follows. "And whatsoever thou shalt bind upon earth, it shall be bound also in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, it shall be loosed also in heaven."

St. Gregory, in his fourth book, Epistle xxxii, writes that all who know the Gospel understand that the care of the whole Church was given to St. Peter, prince and head of all the Apostles, by our Lord; for it was to him He said: "I give you the keys." St. Bernard in writing to Pope Eu-

gene says: "Who are you? The high priest, the Supreme Pontiff. You are the prince of bishops, the inheritor of the Apostles; you are Abel by reason of your primacy, Noë by your power to govern, Abraham in the patriarchate, Melchizedek through order, Aaron on account of your dignity, Moses because of your authority, Samuel as judge, Peter by your power and Jesus Christ following your unctions. You are he to whom were given the keys, to whom the sheep and the lambs were intrusted." (Lib. ii de Consid.)

Another mark of special preëminence is bestowed on St. Peter at the last supper. After speaking to all of His Apostles, Jesus turns to St. Peter and thus addresses him: "Simon, Simon, behold Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not; and thou, being once converted, confirm thy brethren." (Luke xxii, 31, 32.) In this prayer of Jesus for Peter alone, He asks and obtains special privileges for him. The first is a personal one, that he would not lose the faith in Christ, and the other that of indefectibility in the faith both for himself and his successors. "If the Roman Church," writes Baronius, "always flourishes, if it is the mother of all the churches, if the sees of the other Apostles have disappeared and that of Peter alone remains indestructible, notwithstanding the

continued assaults upon it, if after the flight of centuries, Peter's faith, as strong to-day as in the beginning, always unshaken, is published over the whole world, it is by a special privilege granted to him alone, for it is a gift of God and not a result of his works, so that no one may glory in himself." (De Pontifice Romano.)

St. Cyprian calls the see of Rome the Chair of Peter, the principal Church from which emanated a united priesthood. He names it the mother and root of all the churches. (Tract de Unit. Ecc.)

Commenting on the prayer of our Lord for St. Peter, St. Francis de Sales says: "The gardener who sees the young plant exposed to the constant rays of the sun, and who wishes to save it from the drought which threatens it, does not pour water on each branch, but having well steeped the root, considers that all the rest is safe, because the root continues to distribute the moisture to the rest of the plant. Our Lord also having planted, prayed for the head and the root, in order that the water of faith might not fail to him, who was therewith to supply all the rest, and in order that through the head the faith might always be preserved in the Church." (Cat. Contr., p. 258-259.) In the same sense the text has been distinctly understood not only by Cath-

olic but by prominent non-Catholic commentators, as well, of Holy Scripture. They claim that Christ bestowed the primacy on St. Peter.

In the different passages of the Bible so far commented on we find the promise of the primacy made to St. Peter and the prayer of Christ for him that his faith fail not, but that, strong in it, he confirm his brethren.

We come now to the fulfilment of the promise.

Upon the third visit that Jesus made to His Apostles after His resurrection, He spoke in the following words to St. Peter: "Simon, son of John, lovest thou me more than these?" He said to him: Yea, Lord, thou knowest that I love Thee. He saith to him: Feed my lambs. He saith to him again: Simon, son of John, lovest thou me? He saith to him: Yea, Lord, thou knowest that I love thee. He saith to him: Feed my lambs. He said to him the third time: Simon, son of John, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved, because he had said to him the third time: Lovest thou me? And he said to Him: Lord, Thou knowest all things; Thou knowest that I love thee. He said to him: Feed my sheep." (John xxi, 15-17.)

Christ could not more manifestly make good the promise made to St. Peter when He said: "I will give to thee the keys of the kingdom of

heaven." He gives to Simon, son of John, the entire care of the lambs and the sheep of His fold.

Clearly then does our Lord confer on St. Peter the primacy in His Church, which was to go down to all his successors in office to the consummation of the world.

St. Peter alone is questioned by Christ as to his love for Him, and this three consecutive times. None of the other Apostles were interrogated by Jesus, thus showing His selection of St. Peter as His Vicar on earth when He said to him, "Feed My lambs, feed My sheep."

What significance has this command of the Divine Master to St. Peter, if not, that He solemnly appoints him to govern and to have care of the lambs and the sheep of His fold; that is, to watch over the faithful, the priests and the bishops of His Church. | St. Augustine tells us that "he [the Pope] is grounded in the faith of the Church because of the succession of the priesthood from St. Peter, to whom our Lord after His resurrection gave the command to feed His lambs, feed His sheep, down to the bishops of to-day." (Contra Epist. fundam., c. iv.) St. Jerome writing to St. Augustine says: "St. Peter had such supreme authority that St. Paul writes, after three years, I came to Jerusalem to see Peter." (Epist. lxxxix.)

Pope Innocent in his letter to the Fathers of the Council of Carthage, the ninety-first in the letters of St. Augustine, asserts that the episcopate and all its authority comes from Peter.

In positive terms, in clearest language, the Bible teaches that Christ established a primacy of order and jurisdiction in His Church, that He bestowed it on St. Peter and that He continues it uninterruptedly and will continue it unfailingly in the successors of St. Peter till time shall be no more.

In further proof of the bestowal of the primacy on St. Peter, should more proof be required, I might here append what St. Francis de Sales has to say in summing up the Scriptural evidence of the primacy:

"Whoever will read the Scriptures attentively will see this primacy of St. Peter everywhere. If the Church is compared to a building, as it is, its rock and its secondary foundation is St. Peter. (Matt. xvi.) Would you rather have it a kingdom? St. Peter receives its keys. (Matt. xvi.) Will you consider it a flock or fold of sheep and lambs? St. Peter is its pastor and shepherd general. (John xxi.) St. Peter rises up among the Apostles and speaks the first and teaches the interpretation of weighty prophecy. (Acts 1.) He has the first care of the restoration and increase of the Apostolic College (ib.). When a

General Council is sitting, St. Peter as president thereof, opens the gate to judgment and definition; and his sentence is followed by the rest. (Acts xv.)

Everywhere St. Peter is first to act, first to preach, to command, to reprove and to be consulted by the other Apostles. Objection is sometimes made that St. Peter was never in Rome, did not live there and therefore could not have established his see there.

Were this true, the Roman pontiffs could not claim to be the successors of St. Peter, consequently could lay no claim to the primacy over the Universal Church. It will therefore not be amiss to show that St. Peter did live in Rome, did found his see in Rome and died there a martyr's death for Christ's sake.

CHAPTER VII

ST. PETER AT ROME

WITH the advent of the so-called reformation in the sixteenth century there arose, from the very nature of the movement, heated controversies concerning some of the best authenticated facts of Church history. Whatever stood in the way of the presumptuous claims of those would-be reformers, false teachers, and self-constituted prophets must perish at any cost. Truth was denied, historical events falsified, the most irrefutable testimony on past or present happenings wantonly rejected.

As self-appointed historiographers of all ages, the reformers attempted to build a Babel-like historical tower, until the bewildering confusion among them created as many opposing parties as there were leaders.

Honesty is always the best policy. Only such changes as are in accordance with right and justice prove advantageous. Those made against legitimate authority carry with them a curse which, sooner or later, gives rise to evils more fatal than those sought to be redressed.

The whole history of the world proclaims that iniquity, under whatsoever garb it shows itself, cannot be practised with impunity. Iniquity begets iniquity. If we respect not the rights of others, how can we expect them to respect ours? Hence, notwithstanding the acrimonious attacks and bitter invectives of those deluded propagators of false doctrines against one another, all joined forces to combat what they looked upon as their common enemy—the Papacy.

Could they undermine and demolish this great bulwark of Christianity, they believed they would emerge victorious from the conflict. With this object in view, they denied—and that in the face of profane and sacred history—that the Prince of the Apostles was ever at Rome.

So apparent was their sinister motive that many non-Catholic writers of later years unmasked their dark designs. Their purpose was to nullify the tenets of the Church, especially in the matter of Apostolic succession, conceded from the first, without a dissenting voice, to the Sovereign Pontiffs of Rome.

Renan, an atheistical historian, writing in 1873, says, in “L’Antichrist” (p. 551): “The reason Protestants attach so much importance to the denial of St. Peter’s having resided in Rome, is because his domicile in that city con-

stitutes the basis of the great pretensions of the papacy."

In another place he asserts that "it is most probable that St. Peter came to Rome." In still another passage, in the same work, he avers: "All hold that from the close of the second century the universal belief of all Christians was that the Apostle Peter suffered martyrdom at Rome."

The learned Protestant, Harnack, writes in 1876: "The residence of St. Peter at Rome is so patent there is no reasonable ground for its being the subject of controversy."

Albeit the cumulative evidence of both Catholic and non-Catholic authors is so incontrovertible on this historical topic, we find some blindly prejudiced, who, having eyes, see not, having ears, hear not, refusing to accept that St. Peter ever took up his abode in the capital of the Roman Empire.

Hence it is well to examine this question, if for no other purpose than to place in evidence the solid scientific foundations on which our Christian traditions rest.

In the Acts of the Apostles (xii, 17), we read: "He went to another place." The inspired writer refers to St. Peter, after his miraculous deliverance from prison in Jerusalem.

This incident in his life occurred about the year 42 or 43 A. D. A number of Catholic historians and commentators of Holy Scripture claim "this other place" to be Rome. They hold that any other locality would have been designated by name.

It is their unalterable conviction that the chief of the Apostles sought an asylum where he would be subject to less molestation and safe from the malicious persecutions then waged against the Christians in the capital of Judea. The Acts of the Apostles were written in Rome in the year A. D. 63 or 64.

Drastic measures were resorted to by the Jews to exterminate the followers of the crucified and hated Jesus of Nazareth. To escape prison and death, the Christian Hebrews fled in great numbers to Rome. Under such conditions it was natural that St. Peter should follow his flock and set up his see among them. Testimony is not wanting corroborative of the fact that there was at this time a very large gathering of Christian Hebrews in the capital.

In Josephus (*Antiquit.*, Book xiii, chap. xi, p. 6, Vol. II of the Boston edition of 1821), we find that when the Jews sent fifty messengers to Rome to lodge complaints against their ruler, Herod, in the reign of Augustus, there were "above eight thousand of them at Rome." These joined the

delegates from Palestine in a remonstrance against the injustices of Herod.

It is further estimated that in the thirtieth year of the reign of Augustus, which corresponds with the beginning of the Christian era, as gathered from the writings of the very best statistical antiquarians, there were upwards of twelve thousand or more in the great city. The causes that led up to this phenomenal exodus of the Jews from their native soil were the dreadful disasters, the cruel dissensions of Judea and the galling tyranny of their overbearing rulers.

Philo, the historian, records, in the reign of Caligula, that a large portion of the capital beyond the Tiber was occupied by them. Dio, another historian (Book ix) informs us that under Claudius, who governed from 41 to 54 A. D., there were so many Jews in the city that the Emperor, though eager to banish them, withheld lest they break out into a sedition.

He therefore simply issued an edict forbidding their assemblages. It is generally conceded that St. Peter came to Rome in the early part of the reign of Claudius, most probably about the middle or latter part of the year 42 or 43. There can be no question regarding the wide field for his labors among his countrymen in Rome at this period. This, however, did not preclude his visiting, whenever the condition of affairs re-

quired it, Jerusalem, Antioch, Corinth or other places. Evidences of such journeys are not wanting.

St. Jerome writes: "Simon Peter, the Prince of the Apostles, after an episcopate at the Church of Antioch and preaching to those of the Jews who had believed among the dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia, came to Rome in the second year of Claudius." (*De Viris Ill;* i.)

In the year A. D. 49 he was not in Rome, for in that year we find him "come to Antioch," and St. Paul "withstands him to the face." He was not in the capital A. D. 50, since in that year he was at Jerusalem, attending and presiding over the first Council of the Church. In the year A. D. 58 he could hardly have been in the city, for St. Paul, writing to the Roman Church, makes no mention of him. In the year A. D. 50 the Jews, both Christian and non-Christian, were driven out of Rome (*Acts xviii, 2*), "because Claudius had commanded all Jews to depart from Rome." The Romans did not at that date consider the differences between the Jews of any moment or as being more than petty racial bickerings.

The historians relate that by degrees they returned, so that in a short time thousands of them were again dwelling within the walls of the Roman capital.

About the year 58 Christianity was manifestly in a flourishing condition in Rome, for St. Paul writes (Rom. i, 8), their "faith was spoken of in the whole world," and (Rom. xvi, 19), that their "obedience is published in every place." And again (Rom. xv, 23), "But now, having no more place in these countries, and having a great desire these many years to come to you," etc. (Rom. xvi, 14), "Salute Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermas, Patrobas and the brethren that are with them."

St. Peter, according to the best accounts, wrote his first epistle from that great metropolis, which he called Babylon. That this is true the following cogent reasons tend to confirm. During the reign of Claudius the Jews were hounded and hunted down like wild beasts and expelled from Rome, on account of the disturbances fostered by the enormous gains made among all classes of people by Christianity. Thither, however, they found their way back, though few at a time, and deftly, in the beginning. No doubt their recognized chief, St. Peter, was the most objectionable to Jew and to Roman. For this reason it was the part of prudence for him to conceal his whereabouts, as far as possible, and not to divulge to any person that he had resumed his work in the Eternal City.

Nothing more natural in the premises than for

him to make choice of a word which would indicate his place of residence to those who were true to him, whilst it would not disclose it to his implacable pursuers. This talismanic word he readily found in "Babylon."

He addressed himself in a special manner to converted Jews, who were familiar with such figures of speech, possessing as they did a ripe knowledge of the prophets' writings, wherein such metaphors abounded. With this people, the name of a place or city not unfrequently recalled to mind some historical fact which at once made known to them what otherwise it would take copious explanations to describe.

Sodom denoted a place of unnatural crime; Egypt, an idolatrous people; Chanaan, a race accursed; while Babylon was the jailer of their fathers, the avowed hater of their nation, the arrogant mistress of the shackled rulers.

Pagan Rome in the days of St. Peter was by no means an improvement upon ancient Babylon. It was a common occurrence, among the Asiatic Jews, to apply this name to the great Roman city.

St. John the Evangelist so calls it in the Book of Revelation, "that great Babylon is fallen" (xiv, 8); "and great Babylon came in remembrance before God" (xvi, 19); "Babylon the

great, the mother of the fornications and the abominations of the earth" (xvii, 5); and "With such violence as this shall Babylon, that great city, be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all" (xviii, 21). All, irrespective of creed, acknowledge the Babylon of Revelation to be Rome.

In support of the fact that Babylon was taken to signify Rome, I might offer the testimony of Tertullian (*lib. ante Marcion.*), Andrew, and Aretas (*Apoc. xvii*), St. Jerome (*Isaias xi, 7*), and many others.

Papias, Eusebius and many other early historians agree that St. Peter, in heading his first epistle from Babylon, did mean Rome. He evidently had good cause for this substitution and was unmistakably understood by those to whom he addressed himself. Under this title neither Jew nor Christian of the first century could fail to recognize Rome.

Those who cling to the opinion that he established the Church in Babylon of Chaldea or of that in Grand Cairo, have the burden of proof upon them to show cause for their contention. Can they for either place produce a catalogue of his successors? Can they enlighten us as to where, when or how he died? Let them cite a single ancient author who holds an opinion dif-

ferent from us. There is not one who offers the slightest pretense whereon to base his flimsy statements.

Give ear to the reasons which I believe will elucidate fully that this letter could not have been written from Babylonian Chaldea. In the first place, there is nothing to show that St. Peter was ever in that city, whereas we have documentary testimony to prove that he did go to Rome.

This city was known to all Jews by the name of Babylon. The reason of it? The base, atrocious crimes of its inhabitants, their pride, their greed of wealth, their hatred of the Christians and their shameless idolatry.

Now comes the authority of Pliny to confirm the fact that the city of Chaldea was at that epoch almost a ruin in decay. In Book vii, chapter 26, he chronicles the fact that at this very time Babylon of Chaldea was reduced to a barren waste, exhausted by its neighbor Seleucia upon the Tigris, which had been built as its destructive rival by Nicanor.

Strabo tells us that it was then comparatively a desert, whilst Diodorus states that only a small portion of the remains of that city was inhabited. To the foregoing we may add what we cull from the pages of the historian Josephus:

After the death of Arileus and his companions, which took place before the reign of Claudius,

this epistle of St. Peter was written; most of the Jews who sojourned in Babylon, finding that they could not cope with the attacks upon them by the other inhabitants, emigrated to Seleucia. Some years thereafter this Babylon was scourged by a death-dealing plague, which carried off those who still lingered midst its debris. As for those who sought safety in Seleucia, they fared no better. The Greeks and the Syrians of the place, having made common cause against their Jewish fellow citizens, massacred some fifty thousand of them. Those who escaped the dreadful slaughter, saddened and downcast while they lingered upon the borders of the Euphrates or the Tigris, sought refuge in Neerda and in Nisibi.

Admitting, for the sake of argument, that Babylon and not Rome was the place from which the epistle was written, would it not follow that those who resided in the vicinity of this once great metropolis would accept the Chaldean, unless otherwise safeguarded against such an egregious blunder? We find nothing of the kind. There is not a syllable from any of the early well-known writers to throw a glimmer of light upon it, and thus forbid the Christians from laboring under the misapprehension of believing the Babylon of St. Peter to be the Babylon of St. John.

This is evident proof that St. Peter, prefacing his letter Babylon, instead of Rome, did not write

from a city on the Euphrates, the Tigris, or the Nile. Such an array of testimony justifies us in claiming from St. Peter's own writing that he was in Rome.

Hugo Grotius, a Protestant historian, says: "The ancient and the modern interpreters differ concerning Babylon. The ancients interpret it to be Rome, where no true Christian will doubt that Peter was. The modern, Babylon in Chaldea. I agree with the ancients." (*De Veritate Religionis Christianæ*.)

Some, baffled by the obstacles in the way of Babylon on the Euphrates and that on the Nile, advance their claims for Seleucia, which also went under that name. This city, however, is not to be considered, in view of the fifty thousand Jews who were slaughtered there; whilst the few remaining fled to Neerda or Nisibi. The only reasonable deduction from the foregoing well-authenticated facts is that the Babylon where St. Peter wrote his first epistle can be no other than Rome.

A continuous tradition of about fourteen hundred years upholds this statement, which was never in all that period of time contradicted by either friend or foe. Moreover, we hear of no city or country, other than Rome, claiming to be St. Peter's permanent residence or the place of his death. Exclude it, and there remains no trace

of where he died and but scant knowledge of his work, apart from the first Council of Jerusalem, about the year 50.

Bishops Pearson, Care, and Ussher hold that the verdict of the ancient writers on this subject cannot, with any show of justice or reason, be set aside.

Whiston, the translator of Josephus, is in perfect harmony with our views, in his memoirs of his own life (p. 599). "Mr. Brower, with some weak Protestants before him, almost pretended to deny that St. Peter ever was at Rome; concerning which matter, take my own former words out of my three tracts" (p. 53).

"Mr. Baratier proves most thoroughly, as Bishop Pearson has done before him, that St. Peter was at Rome. This is so clear in Christian antiquity that it is a shame for any Protestant to confess that another Protestant ever denied it. This partial procedure demonstrates that Mr. Brower has by no means got clear of the prejudices of some Protestants, as an impartial writer of history—which he pretends to be—ought to do, and has in this case greatly hurt the Protestant cause instead of helping it."

With this opinion of Whiston all scholars of any repute to-day agree. Among his adherents we find such other non-Catholic authorities as Lightfoot, Ellicott, Farrar, Westcott, Gore,

Harnack, Hilgenfeld, Renan, the "Speakers' Commentary," with a host of others.

The last-named has this to say in closing a discussion on Babylon's being Rome: "The foregoing arguments seem to leave us no alternative but to accept the unvarying testimony of the Fathers, who must have known the sense in which the statement was understood throughout Asia Minor, that St. Peter here designated Rome by the title of Babylon."

From St. Peter's domicile in Rome we pass to his death in the same city. That he was put to death by crucifixion is indicated by St. John the Evangelist, in his Gospel (xxi, 18, 19): "Amen, Amen, I say to thee, when thou wast younger, thou didst gird thyself, and didst walk where thou wouldest. But when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and lead thee whither thou wouldest not. And this he said signifying by what death he should glorify God."

To stretch out the hands is an expression used by pagan authors to mean crucifixion. Seneca used the words, "brachia patibulo explicuerunt," meaning crucifixion. The saying of our Lord to St. Peter was fully understood by him to imply the death he was to undergo.

In the Apocalypse there is a passage which the atheistic historian, Renan, not inaptly applies to

the death of SS. Peter and Paul (Apocl. xviii, 20): "Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye holy Apostles and prophets; for God hath judged your judgment on her." All admit that the judgment here pronounced against Babylon is meant for pagan Rome. There is no possible meaning for this text of Scripture unless it be concerning the death of the two Apostles.

In the "Speakers' Commentary" we are told: "The testimony of early Christian writers is uniform and unwavering. From whatever quarter their voices reach us, they affirm that Babylon is here (First Epistle of St. Peter), a recognized appellation of Rome, the city which occupied the place of that ancient city as the central world power, the headquarters of anti-Christian influences. In fact, no other view of the passage was ever entertained before the time of Calvin. Papias, Clement of Alexandria, Jerome, Eusebius, all state this to be a well-known fact needing no defence."

Acumenius calls Rome, Babylon, on account of the preëminence of old which belonged to Babylon. Bishop Ellicott, of Gloucester, writes: "It is the marvel that there should have been any so hardly sceptical as to reject altogether evidence as strong, early, and wide as that on which we believe Hannibal invaded Italy."

From the Scriptures and tradition we now turn

our attention to the Fathers of the Church, to glean from their lucid writings what they hold on the question under investigation.

St. Epiphanius was born at Eleutheropolis, in Palestine, about the year 315. In his youth he devoted himself to the study of the Hebrew, Egyptian, Syriac, Greek, and Latin languages, for the purpose of being the better equipped for a thorough comprehension of the Scriptures. In his early years he secluded himself in the wilds of Egypt. In 333 he came to Palestine, where he erected a monastery near the place of his birth. His time was given to labor, study, prayer, meditation and fasts. In 367 he was appointed Bishop of Constantia, the ancient Salamina, in the island of Cyprus. In the year 382 he accompanied St. Paulinus of Nola to Rome, during the pontificate of Damasus. He made his travels a means of adding to his already vast storehouse of learning. He died at sea in the year 403.

In his work on the heresy of Carpocrates, he says: "Peter and Paul were the first in Rome." Further on, he writes: "The succession of bishops in Rome was as follows: Peter and Paul, Linus, Cletus, Clement, Evaristus, Alexander, etc." This is convincing evidence from one of such profound erudition, whose research was untiring, whose opportunities were so varied.

St. Jerome, born in or between 331 and 340, died in 420. It was his good fortune to possess unlimited resources for obtaining a fund of information in Rome, Palestine and other localities where facilities for learning were plentiful. "When a boy," he informs us, "I studied the liberal arts at Rome. I was wont to make a round of visits to the tombs of the Apostles and martyrs, with others of the same age and inclinations, and often to descend into the caves, which are dug up into the earth and have for walls on each side the bodies of those who are interred there."

He applied himself assiduously to the study of the Scriptures, possessing a knowledge of them perhaps unsurpassed. Among his dissertations on illustrious men we meet with this strong testimony about St. Peter: "Simon Peter went to Rome in order to vanquish Simon Magus, and there he held the sacerdotal chair during twenty-five years; that is, in the fourteenth or last year of Nero, by whom he was fastened to the cross, and suffered martyrdom with his head downwards to the earth."

In his first epistle to Pope Damasus, the thirty-seventh Bishop of Rome, wherein he discourses on the term hypostasis, he emphatically states: "I speak with the successor of the fisherman, and the disciple of the cross; I am joined in

communion with Your Holiness, that is, to the Chair of Peter."

St. Ambrose, Bishop of Milan, was born in Gaul in the year 340, his father at the time being prefect of the Praetorian guards. Ambrose, while governor of Northern Italy, received the appointment to the see of Milan, where he was consecrated in 374. His death occurred about the year 397. Educated in Rome, he had most excellent opportunities of ferreting out the origin of the Church.

In his sixty-eighth sermon he relates a beautiful incident in the life of St. Peter, in reference to his residence and death in Rome: "O truest of Fathers, remember the words you said so often, that you were willing to lay down your life for our safety; may we not ask you for the sake of our salvation to be willing to bear yet for a while longer the burden of life?"

"So he bade them farewell, and blessed the brethren and started off alone to seek safety without the walls. And when he had scarcely passed the city gates he saw Christ coming to him, and he fell down and worshipped Him, and said to Him: 'Lord, whither goest thou?' And Christ said to him: 'I come to Rome to be crucified once more.' And Peter said to Him: 'Lord, wilt thou be crucified afresh?' And the Lord said to him: 'Yea, I shall be crucified afresh.'

And Peter said: 'I will turn back and follow Thee.' And when he had spoken, the Lord ascended into heaven. And Peter turned back and went into the city with joy, glorifying God and telling the brethren how Christ had met him, and declared to him how that He was in him about to be crucified. And being quickly seized upon, he by his cross honored Jesus Christ."

In his Book III on the sacraments (chap. i) he has this in confirmation of the above narrative: "Truly we have as the author of this our assertion, Peter the Apostle, who was the first of the Roman Church."

St. Paulinus, Bishop of Nola, came of illustrious parents, who lived in Bordeaux in the year 353. His education was obtained in the best schools of his day. He had talent, fortune, books and companionship with the most learned men of his time. In the year 394 he withdrew from the affairs of the world to devote the remainder of his life to the service of God. In 409 he was made bishop and died in 431. In his *Carmina Natalitia* (3) we read: "And Rome herself, powerful in the sacred monuments of the heavenly leaders, in Peter and in Paul."

St. John Chrysostom, born about the year 344, at Antioch, was the only son of Secundus, general of the imperial troops in Syria. His name commands respect by reason of his knowledge and

eloquence. He was consecrated Bishop of Constantinople on February 26, 398. His death occurred on September 14, 407. In his commentaries on Psalm xviii, he explains: "Because Peter, the fisherman, took possession of the chief royal city, he shines even after death more splendid than the sun." In his homily (32) on the Epistle to the Romans, he writes: "The heavens do not shine so bright when the sun shoots forth its rays as doth the city of the Romans, pouring out the light of those two lamps through all the world. From this place Paul will be snatched; from this place, Peter. Consider and be astonished what a spectacle Rome will behold, to-wit: Paul arising suddenly from the repository, together with Peter, and borne upwards to meet the Lord."

Eutropius, a learned historian, born in the same century, wrote ten books of the history of Rome, down to the time of the Emperor Valens. He gives this testimony in Book VIII, on the life of Nero: "Finally, he added this to all his crimes, that he butchered the holy Apostles of God, Peter and Paul."

St. Sulpicius Severus, of a rich and illustrious Roman family, first saw the light of day near Toulouse in Aquitania, about the year 363. He was an able, learned barrister and author of an ecclesiastical history and works of hagiography.

Owing to his elegant style he was surnamed the Christian Sallust. It is supposed that he entered the monastery near Marseilles, founded by Cassian, where he died in 397.

In Book II of his Chronicle, he relates that "the divine religion had grown strong in the city, Peter being Bishop there and Paul having been afterwards led to Rome. Paul and Peter were sentenced to death,—Paul was beheaded with a sword; Peter was lifted on a cross."

Papias was a contemporary and companion of St. Polycarp, who was a disciple of St. John the Evangelist. He instructed St. Irenæus, who died Bishop of Lyons about 211. The latter was also taught by St. Polycarp.

Papias, Bishop of Hierapolis, is a coeval historian, who gives us, having obtained the same from eye-witnesses and ear-witnesses, an account of the residence and death of St. Peter at Rome.

We gather from Eusebius (chapter xv) the following: "When the heavenly word came to Rome, immediately the power of Simon Magus was rendered useless. On the other hand, such a light of piety enlightened the minds of those that heard Peter that they wished to hear him often and desired to possess his teachings in writing. They therefore prayed St. Mark to put the preaching of St. Peter into writing, and they

ceased not their supplications until they had persuaded him to comply with their entreaties."

Papias asserts that Mark is mentioned by St. Peter in his first epistle, which he wrote while in Rome and called this city Babylon. He gives by name the places into which the Apostles went after their dispersion to preach the Gospel. Thomas chose Parthia; Andrew, Scythia; John, Asia; while St. Peter preached to the dispersed Jews throughout Pontus, Galatia, Bithynia, Capadocia, and Asia. While tarrying in Rome, he was seized and crucified with his head downwards, according to his own wishes.

Ignatius, who was a disciple of St. Peter and St. Paul and of St. John the Evangelist, became the second Bishop, after Peter, of the Church of Antioch. Evodius, who in the year 43 succeeded St. Peter, was the first of his successors in Antioch. St. John Chrysostom and Theodoret give us to understand that Ignatius received his appointment from the Prince of the Apostles and was by him and St. Paul consecrated bishop.

His episcopacy lasted for upwards of forty years, and he died a martyr in Rome between 98 and 117. In his Epistle to the Romans, just before being thrown for food to the ferocious beasts at the public games in the Roman capital, he refers to the authority of St. Peter and St. Paul over them: "Pray to Christ for me, that

in this I may become a sacrifice to God. I do not command you as did Peter and Paul; they were Apostles, I am a convict." (iv, 3.)

The ancient writers claim that this was in reference to an order given by the Apostles to the Christians in Rome not to interfere in their martyrdom.

About fifty years after the days of Dionysius of Corinth, Caius is quoted by Eusebius (Book II, chap. 25) as relating what here follows: "When Nero professed himself the open enemy of the divinity and piety, sought first the death of the Apostles, as being the leaders and standard-bearers amongst the people of God, and condemned Paul to lose his head in the city of Rome and Peter to the punishment of the cross." I think it useless to search for extrinsic evidence of those things, since their monuments testify to the facts to-day.

St. Irenæus, Bishop of Lyons, was born about the year 140 in Asia Minor. He was a disciple of the great St. Polycarp, Bishop of Smyrna, who was a pupil of St. John the Evangelist.

Polycarp visited Pope Anicetus in Rome about the year 154. He was certainly well aware of who was the first occupant of that see. He suffered martyrdom in 155 after serving Christ for eighty-six years. From him St. Irenæus learned in part the teachings of Christianity.

Tertullian (*Contra Valent.*, 65) calls Irenæus "the most diligent searcher of all doctrines." St. Epiphanius says of him that he was "a most learned and eloquent man, endowed with all the gifts of the Holy Ghost."

Theodoret styles him "the light of Western Gaul." He was raised to the dignity of the priesthood by Pothinus, Bishop of Lyons. In the year 177, he visited Pope Eleutherius at Rome, on business for the Church in Lyons. While there he had ample opportunity of learning whatever was of interest to that Church or its rulers. During his absence in Rome, Bishop Pothinus was put to death, with thousands of his flock, under Severus. Irenæus, on his return, was chosen Bishop of Lyons.

In Book III, chap. 3, he writes: "The Apostles left their doctrine and the truth of all the mysteries of faith to their successors, the pastors, and it is fit that we should have recourse to them to learn; especially to the greatest Church, the most ancient and best known to all, founded at Rome by the two most glorious Apostles, Peter and Paul, which retains the tradition it received from them and which is derived through a succession of bishops down to us.

"SS. Peter and Paul chose Linus to succeed at their death, and then followed Anacletus, Clem-

ent, Hyginus, Pius, Anicetus, Soter and Eleutherius, who is the twelfth from the Apostles."

Tertullian, in his work, "Prescription of Heretics," records that St. Peter was crucified at Rome. "Happy Church," he says, "for which the Apostles poured out their entire doctrine, together with their blood! Where Peter is assimilated to his suffering Lord, and Paul is crowned in a death like John's."

St. Cyprian, Bishop of Carthage, was the son of one of the principal senators of that city. He embraced the Christian faith at an advanced age. Having excellent talents and facilities, he acquired a splendid education. He had extensive intercourse with the Church of Rome after his elevation to the see of his native city. In a number of places he calls Rome "the See of Peter," "the Chair of Peter," "the principal Church whence the priestly unity hath arisen."

In Book IV, Epistle II, to Antoninus, he says: "Cornelius was made Bishop, when the place of Fabian—that is, the place of Peter—and the degree of the sacerdotal chair was vacant."

Lactantius, a disciple of Arnobius, at Sicca in Africa, was converted from paganism to Christianity at Nicomedia about the year 290. In 317 he became preceptor to Crispus, the son of Constantine.

His greatest work is the "Divine Institutions," first published in 320. I take from Book IV, chapter 20, this passage: "Christ at the time of His departure manifested to His disciples the things that were to happen, which Peter and Paul preached in Rome. After Nero had put them to death, Vespasian extinguished the name and nation of the Jews, and did all those things which they foretold were to take place."

St. Athanasius, Bishop of Alexandria, writing to the hermits, announces to them that the enemies of Christianity did not spare Liberius, the Bishop of Rome, which see was Apostolic. He introduces Liberius, in the same letter, to the hermits, as saying: "Never has such been handed down to us by the Fathers, who have received their traditions from the blessed and great Peter."

Origen, the great master of the catechetical school of Alexandria, was born in the year 185 or 186. In 212 he went to Rome during the pontificate of Zephyrinus, being fully prepared to obtain a thorough understanding of its ecclesiastical history. On his authority Eusebius relates the manner in which St. Peter was crucified, with his head downwards, at his own request.

"And Peter, having waited in Rome to the last, was crucified there, his head being down-

wards, which was done at his own request, lest he should appear to be equal to his Lord." (Lib. III, in Gen.)

We here close our testimony from the writings of the Fathers of the Church, which of itself conclusively establishes our thesis that St. Peter lived and died at Rome. Well might we rest from giving further proof, but to leave no stone unturned that may give greater weight to our claim, I shall, as a last argument, draw upon the discoveries of archæology.

Archæology is the science of antiquities, that branch of knowledge which takes cognizance of past civilizations and investigates their history in all fields, by means of the remains of art, architecture, monuments, inscriptions, literature, language, implements, customs and all other examples which have survived.

Professor Lanciani, a most excellent authority on Roman antiquities, says in his work on Pagan and Christian Rome: "I write about the monuments of Rome from a strictly archæological point of view, avoiding questions which pertain, or are supposed to pertain, to religious controversy. For the archæologist the presence and the execution of SS. Peter and Paul in Rome are facts established beyond a shadow of doubt by purely monumental evidence. There is no event of the imperial age, and of imperial Rome, which

is attested by so many noble structures, all of which point to the same conclusion—the presence and execution of the Apostles in the Capital of the Empire."

Eusebius (*Eccl. Hist.* vii, 18), St. Augustine (*Concordance* 1-10) and St. Ambrose (*Twenty-third Epistle*) bear testimony to the authentic portraits of St. Peter and St. Paul existing in their day. The likenesses of these two Apostles had been carefully treasured in Rome from the very lifetime of those great men of God. They were familiar to all, even to the very school children. They are disclosed to us painted in the cubiculi of the catacombs, engraved in gold leaf in the *Vetri Cemeteriali*, cast in bronze, hammered in silver or copper and designed in mosaic. The type does not vary. We have nothing of the kind of any of the other Apostles. The antiquity and genuineness of the portraits are beyond suspicion. They are exclusively of Rome, where the art of portrait painting alone flourished.

Next comes the Chair of St. Peter in Rome. It is certain that the custom existed in the Apostolic Churches to keep in sacred memory the chairs occupied by the first bishop and use them for the installation of their successors.

Concerning the Church of Jerusalem, Eusebius says: "The Chair of James, who was appointed Bishop of Jerusalem by our Savior and the

Apostles, having been preserved until our day, is honored with the greatest reverence by the brethren of that Church from ancient times." Herman, he further states, obtained the Apostolic Chair of James, which is still held sacred in that see. It is there venerated as a most precious relic.

Valerius speaks of the Chair of St. Mark as cherished in the Church of Alexandria. In the Acts of St. Peter, Bishop of Alexandria, is related the great respect he paid to this chair. He declined using it himself, deeming it too sacred for him, and occupied its footstool only.

These instances suffice to show that the Church of Rome would exhibit no less a veneration for the Chair of St. Peter.

And, in truth, so it has been. Tertullian confirms our belief. "Run," he says, "through the Apostolic Churches in which the very chairs of the Apostles as yet stand in their proper places. If you are near Italy, you have Rome, where authority is at hand for us."

St. Optatus writes vigorously on the same subject: "Render an account of the origin of your chair, since you claim to be the Holy Church, and even say that you have a portion in the city of Rome. But if you ask Macrobius where he sits in that city, will he be able to reply, 'In the Chair of St. Peter?' I doubt if he even knew it

by sight, and to its church he does not approach. Behold, there are existing the two churches of the Apostles; say if he have been able to enter there or there have offered sacrifice."

Evodius of Pavia explains how the newly baptized were obliged to go in their white robes to the Chair of the Apostles.

We now come to speak of the tomb of these Apostles in Rome. Caius, in the third century, alludes to the trophies of SS. Peter and Paul, as found on the Vatican and on the Ostian Way. In this he refers to the tombs of the Apostles.

The historian Eusebius relates that Nero was the most implacable of the enemies of Christ and His Church. He raged against the Apostles. In his reign, Paul was beheaded at Rome and Peter was fastened to the cross. For the truth of what he says, he points to the monuments over the tombs of SS. Peter and Paul, which may yet be found in the cemeteries of Rome.

The "Liber Pontificalis" furnishes us with undisputable proof of the same fact: "The bodies of the holy Apostles were kept at the place called Catacombs, the third milestone on the Appian Way, for the space of one year and seven months, until the places in which their bodies were laid had been constructed."

They were brought back in great pomp and pageantry, the body of St. Peter was placed on

the Vatican, and that of St. Paul was laid on the Ostian Way, at the second milestone. Over the tomb of St. Peter stands to-day that marvel of human genius, that gorgeous masterpiece of Christian architecture, consecrated to the memory, and that on the very spot of his crucifixion, of the first Vicar of Christ, St. Peter, Prince of the Apostles and Founder of Christ's Church on the ashes of the capital of paganism.

If conscientious and learned expounders of the Scriptures are to be believed; if history has any value in the records it treasures up of the lives and times of epoch-making men; if tradition can claim authority; if the Fathers of the Church, men of learning, probity, sanctity, and veracity, have a right to command our attention; if archæology carries weight in unraveling the intricate questions of past ages and generations of men, then is it folly for any respecter of truth to call in question the presence of St. Peter in Rome, to deny that he lived and died there, in view of what we have placed before our readers from those fountains of knowledge and truth.

By all of them we are told, with unfaltering, unanimous voices, that St. Peter, Vicar of Christ and Prince of the Apostles, founded his see and suffered martyrdom in the City of the Popes.

CHAPTER VIII

THE BIBLE AND THE UNITY OF THE CHURCH

It is important that we should have a clear idea of the nature of the Church of Christ. With this knowledge, we will be in a better position to understand more intelligently the Biblical teachings concerning the unity of the Church.

The Church is a visible, organic body. She is of divine origin, possessing organs which have their specific functions and receive their life from the head, who is Christ. Being an organism, she lives her own divine life, and that from her own center. She imparts of her life to all her members. Her life, therefore, comes not from the members who constitute her, but it goes out to them from her. Hence St. Cyprian says, that in order to have God as our Father we must have the Church for our Mother. Just as the mother precedes the birth of the child, the Church precedes the birth of the believer. To be the maternal source of life to the believer, as she is, she herself must be a living unity. From unity all life springs. Being an organic body, a veritable organism, unity is essential to her very existence.

As the unity of the soul demands the unity of the body, so the unity of the invisible Church requires unity in her visible existence. This visible unity is possible only through the Pope and the Roman See, which constitute the center of life in the Church. Christ is the invisible, Peter and his successors are the visible head of the Church. Christ, says St. Paul, "is the head of the body, the Church" (Col. i, 18), and in the twenty-fourth verse of the same chapter: "I fill up those things that are wanting of the sufferings of Christ, in my flesh, for his body, which is the Church." He writes on the same subject to the Ephesians (chapter i, verses 22-23): "He hath subjected all things under his feet, and hath made him head over all the Church, which is his body, and the fulness of him who is filled all in all."

Very clearly does the Apostle declare that the head he here speaks of, is the life of the organism, the Church. Having told us the reason why the Church is, he adds (Eph. iv, 15-16): "But doing the truth in charity we may in all things grow up in him, who is the head, even Christ, from whom the whole body being compacted and fitly joined together, by what every joint supplieth, according to the operation in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in charity." And in chapter fifth, verses twenty-ninth and thirtieth of the

same epistle, he writes: "For no man ever hateth his own flesh: but nourisheth and cherisheth it, as also Christ doth the Church; because we are members of his body, of his flesh and of his bones."

Writing on similar lines to the Galatians (chapter iii, verses 27-28), he says: "For as many of you as have been baptized in Christ, have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek; there is neither bond nor free; there is neither male nor female. For you are all one in Christ Jesus."

St. Paul alone of all the sacred writers defines the Church. In so doing he does not limit himself in regard to the subject of the Church as an organic body, to one epistle or two, but recurs to it in many. Thus writing to the Romans (chapter xii, verses 4-5), he states: "For as in one body we have many members, but all the members have not the same office; so we being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another." Still more forcibly does he put it to the Corinthians, Epistle I (chapter xii, verses 12-28): "For as the body is one and hath many members, and all the members of the body, whereas they are many, yet are one body, so also is Christ. For in one spirit were we all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Gentiles, whether bond or free, and in one spirit we have all been

made to drink. For the body also is not one member, but many. If the foot should say, because I am not the hand, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? . . . If the whole body were the eye, where would be the hearing? If the whole body were hearing, where would be the smelling? But now God hath set the members every one of them in the body as it hath pleased Him. And if they were all one member, where would be the body? But now there are many members indeed, yet one body. . . . But God hath tempered the body together, giving to that which wanted the more abundant honor, that there might be no schism in the body; but the members might be mutually careful one for another. And if one member suffer anything, all the members suffer with it; or if one member glory, all the members rejoice with it. Now you are the body of Christ, and members of member. And God indeed hath set some in the Church: first apostles, secondly prophets, thirdly doctors; after that miracles, then the graces of healings, helps, governments, kinds of tongues, interpretations of speeches." This enumeration of different offices or members of Christ's mystical body by St. Paul, leaves no room for doubt as to what he considers the Church to be; a visible, living organism, an organic body divinely constituted; each organ destined for some specific work, while

all are gathered together in Christ, their head, from whom they all receive life.

To fasten still more upon our minds what he is contending for, and to further clinch his reasoning on the subject, he writes in the fourth chapter of his Epistle to the Ephesians, from the fourth to the sixth verse: "One body and one spirit; as you are called in one hope of your calling. One Lord, one faith, one baptism. One God and Father of all, who is above all, through all and in us all." And in verses eleventh to fourteenth he enumerates the different members of the organism. "And he gave some Apostles, and some Prophets, and others some Evangelists, and others some pastors and doctors."

He does not stop at this, but continuing he tells us why those offices and powers were bestowed. "For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ." When shall these powers cease to be? How long shall they endure? Are they simply for the lifetime of those who first received them or are they to be perpetuated? He leaves no surmise upon this point either, for he continues: "Until we all meet into the unity of faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the age of the fulness of Christ, in order that we may escape the melancholy state of being children tossed to and fro,

and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the wickedness of men, by cunning craftiness, by which they lie in wait to deceive."

The Divine Founder of the Church, Jesus Christ, did not leave us without a comprehensive view, a thorough understanding of her nature. It will be found in His teachings and His works. He gathered around Him a certain number of followers, to whom He gave the mission of preaching the kingdom of God among men. "Go ye not," said He to the twelve, "into the way of the Gentiles, and into the city of the Samaritans enter ye not. But go ye rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." (Matt. x, 5-6.) He makes selection of others whom He in like manner commissioned to preach the word of God. "The Lord appointed also other seventy-two; and he sent them two and two before his face into every city and place whither he himself was to come." (Luke x, 1.) One of the twelve was chosen by Him to be the rock on which His Church was to be solidly built. Simon Bar-Jona, surnamed Cephas, or Rock, was the one whom Christ selected and He gave to him the keys of the kingdom of heaven. He made him the confirmer of the faith of the others and placed him as chief shepherd over His whole flock when He said to him: "Feed my lambs," "feed my sheep." Christ, as the in-

visible head of the Church, is the source of her life, while St. Peter, the visible head of the Church, is the center of her outward communion and external government. Before our Lord ascended into heaven He gave command to the Apostles to remain in Jerusalem and there abide until the Paraclete would come upon them, whom He would send. "He will teach you all things and bring all things to your mind, whatsoever I shall have said to you." (John xiv, 26.) And in the Acts (chapter ii, verses 2-4), we have the fulfillment of His promise: "Suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a mighty wind coming, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. And there appeared to them parted tongues as it were of fire, and it sat upon every one of them, and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they began to speak with divers tongues, according as the Holy Ghost gave them to speak." On that first Pentecostal Sunday, the Church of the living God came forth among men. On that day she was born. Through the preaching of the word of God on that day by St. Peter, her visible head, she demonstrated by the conversion of three thousand Jews and Gentiles the divine power that was hers to convert the nations and bring them within the one sheepfold of Christ Jesus.

Pertinent to this unity of the Church so lucidly enunciated in Holy Scripture, St. Cyprian in his

treatise on the subject, writes, A. D. 251: "There is one God, and one Christ, and His Church is one, and the faith one, and a people one, joined into a solid oneness of body by a cementing concord. Unity can not be sundered, nor can one body be divided by the dissolution of its structure, nor be cast piecemeal abroad with vitals torn and lacerated. Whatever is parted from the womb can not live and breathe in its separated state; it loses its principle of life." The Church is that divine, living organism, whose unity is to make manifest the divine mission of the Messias and be the visible link of union between Him and His followers.

St. John gives us in his gospel the prayer uttered by our Savior at the last supper for the unity of His Church. "And not for them only do I pray, but for them also who through their word shall believe in me. That they all may be one, as thou, Father, in me and I in thee; that they also may be one in us; that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou hast given me, I have given to them, that they may be one, as we also are one." (John xvii, 20.)

A more fervent prayer for unity in His Church our Lord could not have poured out from His Sacred Heart to His heavenly Father. But He tells us why His soul was in His pleading,—"that

the world may believe," "that the world may know thou hast sent me," "that they also may be one in us,"—to prevent any dismemberment of this organism, to cement more and more the bond of unity between the members of the Church.

St. Paul writes to the Hebrews (chapter xiii, verse 9): "Be not carried away with various and strange doctrines. . . . "Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing and that there be no schism among you, but that you be perfect in the same mind, and in the same judgment." (1 Corinthian, chapter i, v. 10.) And in his Epistle to the Galatians (chapter i, verse 9): "If any preach to you a gospel besides that which you have received, let him be anathema."

These teachings of Holy Scripture show conclusively that unity is an essential element in the Church founded by Jesus Christ. But unity is the very life of the Catholic Church, the same yesterday, to-day and forever. She has received and taught from the beginning every teaching revealed by Christ our Lord. She has never varied from that divine revelation or the teachings of her faith. In her is the infallible rule of faith, by which her unity is assured for all time. She cuts off from her communion all, whether individuals or nations, who dare to change, to deny or to invent a single article of faith.

St. Augustine avers that the Holy Ghost is the love and union of the Father and the Son, to Him belongs the society through which we are one. "The body of man is composed of many members, one soul animates all the members, giving to the eye, sight, to the ear, hearing, and the same to the other members. Thus the Holy Ghost unites and gives life to the members of the body of Jesus Christ which is his Church." (*Civit. Dei.*) In the Acts of the Apostles (chapter ix, verse 4 sq.), we find that St. Paul, while still a persecutor of the Church of Christ, heard a voice saying to him, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? Who said, Who art thou, Lord." And he: "I am Jesus whom thou persecutest."

Note well that Jesus does not ask Saul why he persecutes His Church. No, He says to him: "Why persecutest thou me?" He shows plainly that the Church is one with Him. She is His mystical body. So closely are they united that He claims to be her head, her heart, her soul, her very life. Hence St. John writes of Him: "I am the vine; you, the branches; he that abideth in me, and I in him the same beareth much fruit; for without me you can do nothing. If any one abide not in me, he shall be cast forth as a branch and shall wither." (*John xv, 5-6.*) The unity of the Church is so patent in the writings of Holy

Scripture that only the blind can fail to see it.

By reason of this unity in His Church, our Lord calls us His friends, His brothers, His sisters, His mother; He calls His God, our God, His Father, our Father.

“But go,” said He to Mary Magdalen after His resurrection, “to my brethren and say to them: I ascend to my Father and to your Father; to my God and to your God.” (John xx, 17.) On almost every page of the Holy Scripture do we find emphasized the unity of the Church. To gainsay its existence, its necessity in Christ’s mystical body, the Church, would be to contradict every word that has come from the lips of the Divine Founder of Christianity. He not only gave unity to His Bride, the Church, but He besought His heavenly Father in most earnest prayer to have that unity abide with her all days to the consummation of the world.

Standing like a lone pillar, midst wreck and ruin, the Catholic Church bears indelibly stamped upon her fair form, the mark of unity. It is her life, and since the Bible assures us that it is inherent in the Spouse of Christ, the Church, she is the true Church of the Bible.

CHAPTER IX

THE BIBLE AND THE CROSS

THERE is not a soldier of any land throughout the world, who does not hold sacred the standard under whose folds he marches forth to defend, aye, to die for his country.

An affront offered to that standard is as an insult hurled against his native land or himself, which he resents with all the warmth of true patriotism.

Such is his devotion for the flag that his heart's blood is not too great a sacrifice to defend its honor. In death it is his winding sheet. Will the Christian soldier, the follower of the Crucified, entertain less respect, less devotion for his standard, the Cross? Was it not borne by the hand of his leader when He mounted Calvary's summit and in His death upon its wood, won the momentous victory over the combined forces of the powers of darkness and the world?

It was so honored from the beginning. The Apostles took their inspiration from it; the faithful were cheered by it; the confessors of the faith found their strength in it; the martyrs clinging to

it laved it with their life's blood, thereby gaining the crown of glory that no man could take from them. It was holy with all who became soldiers of the Crucified. It was always before their eyes, they were enthused by it in battle, grasped it in death and reverently pressed it to their bosom as they breathed their last breath, for unto such the Cross is the power of God. "Christ crucified is the power of God and the wisdom of God." (I Cor. i, 24.)

To the eye of faith these divine attributes shine forth in the Cross of Calvary more expansive than the power and wisdom displayed in the deep heavens, revealing to each generation more of its hidden light, and even more of the goodness and benignity of our God. So great did the Cross become that it was set upon Rome's proud capitol and shone conspicuously in the diadem of her rulers.

What now is the place occupied by that sacred emblem of man's redemption? Alas! times have changed and peoples have changed with them. Many, very many, who bear the name of Christians are ashamed of the Cross. Of them St. Paul says, "For many walk, of whom I have told you often and now tell you weeping, that they are enemies of the Cross of Christ." (Phil. iii, 18.) In our day, as in the early days of Christianity, the Cross is held in benediction only by the true

followers of Christ. In honoring it they emulate and follow the example of the Apostles who loved it as the symbol of their faith, and desire us to look upon it in the same light.

THE POWER AND GRACES OF THE CROSS

The inspired writers of Holy Scripture leave us not without special instruction regarding the Cross of Christ.

St. Paul in his first epistle to the Corinthians, says: "For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the Gospel, not in wisdom of speech, lest the Cross of Christ should be made void. For the word of the Cross, to them indeed that perish, is foolishness, but to them that are saved, that is to us, it is the power of God" (chapter i, 17-18).

The Cross is in very truth the power of God, the fountain of His blessings, the source of His graces, the strength of the weak, the glory of the humble and the life of those who die in Christ.

St. John Chrysostom, in his fourth homily, speaks beautifully of the power of the Cross and of the graces which flow from it. "The Cross is the hope of Christians, the resurrection of the dead, a guide to the blind, the uplifting of the despondent, an aid to the cripple, the consolation of the poor, a restraining force upon the rich, the confusion of the proud, the punishment of

the wicked. It triumphs over Satan, conquers the powers of darkness and leads the youth in the path of virtue. The Cross is the mother of the orphan, the defender of the widow, the refuge of the afflicted. It is a light for those who sit in the shadow of darkness, and wisdom for those whom a stupid, blind and impious world looks upon as foolish. Before it the pagan temples have fallen, their idols have been destroyed. It is a scandal to the Jews because of their obstinacy, a ruin to the wicked, who despise it; it is bread for the hungry, drink for the thirsty, and clothing for the naked." (Homil. iv, de Cruce.)

"The Cross," says St. John Damascene, "is the key of Paradise, the help of the weak, the crook of the shepherd, a guide to those who return from waywardness, perfection for those who seek to advance in the path of virtue, the salvation of the soul, a protection against all evils and the principle of all good." (Lib. IV, de Fide, chap. xii.)

"He who finds Christ," says St. Bernard, "finds Him on the Cross. The soul must cling to this tree of life in order to gather its fruits, which are excellent." (De Crucis laud.) And St. Augustine declares that the Cross stands while the demons are put to flight, it is victorious while death suffers defeat. Through the power of the Cross, Satan is in chains, man is freed from his bonds and God is glorified. (Serm. de Pass.)

THE CROSS THE GOODNESS OF GOD

"O senseless Galatians," writes St. Paul, "who hath bewitched you, that you should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ hath been set forth crucified among you?" (Gal. iii, 1.) "In his passion," says Lactantius, "Jesus Christ extended on the Cross His arms which measure the earth, to signify that from east to west a great people formed of all nations and speaking all tongues will gather and find shelter under its powerful protection." (Lib. IV, c. xxxi.)

The goodness of Jesus Christ is especially manifested on the Cross. Thereon He shows his infinite goodness in order to draw us to Him by love and gratitude. He died upon the Cross through no necessity of His own, but because of His love for us. On the Cross He offers us a model of obedience, constancy, justice, penance, courage, mortification, goodness, in a word, of all virtues.

"O ineffable and immense goodness of God," cries out St. Ephrem, "who by the Cross gave so great and so many gifts to mankind." (Serm. de Cruce.)

THE CROSS THE WISDOM OF GOD

"But," writes St. Paul to the Corinthians, "we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews, indeed, a stumbling block, and unto the Gentiles foolish-

ness; but unto them, that are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God" (I, chapter i, 23-29).

On the Cross, our Lord was weak, weakness itself, yet the Apostle tells us He "is the power of God." So in truth He is. Like wolves howling for their prey, the merciless executioners threw Him upon the Cross and nailed Him to it. But now the true and transcendent power of the Cross is made manifest for the Scripture's record, "That all the multitude that came together to that sight and saw the things that were done, returned beating their breasts." The pride of human reason would never have consented that a stable was a proper birth-place for Christ, that a life of poverty and labor should be His portion among His own creatures, or that He should die upon the Cross.

All this is folly with those who would dictate to God what acts are becoming to Him and what are not. But the foolishness of God is wiser than men. "Oh, the depths of the riches of the wisdom of God," exclaims St. Paul, which did not leave the sacrifice of the Cross a mere fact in history, imbedded in the past, but has had it to come down through the ages and will so continue it to the end of the world in the sacrifice of the Mass, which is identical with that of the Cross, with the

single difference that one is the bloody, and the other the unbloody sacrifice of Christ.

SCIENCE OF THE CROSS

All the holy men and women of God have sought the divine knowledge of the Cross. No wonder then that St. Paul will have us understand what he considers to be the acme of science. "For," he says, "I judged not myself to know anything among you, but Jesus Christ, and him crucified." (I Cor. ii, 2.) This knowledge of the Cross was so great and beautiful that by it he confounded the philosophers of Athens and the whole world.

The Cross is a book written with blood and nails. In it the great and the humble, the rich and the poor, the learned and the ignorant, may read of the infinite love of our Savior for us, the enormity of sin, and the dreadful punishment that awaits those who reject Christ crucified.

In this book of the Cross all may learn obedience, patience, goodness, resignation, love of God, in a word, all virtues, all perfections. Is it to be wondered at that St. Bonaventure says: "The Cross is the book which taught me all I know, all I write. For at the feet of the Crucifix my soul draws from heaven greater wisdom than from all other studies and discussions." (In Speculo.) St. Augustine, in his sermon on the passion, de-

clares that the Cross to which our Redeemer was nailed and upon which He died is the seat from which the Divine Master teaches the whole world. (Serm. in Paras.)

GLORY OF THE CROSS

"But God forbid that I should glory, save in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified to me and I to the world." (Gal. vi, 14.)

Commenting upon this passage of Holy Scripture, St. Augustine says: "The Apostle could glorify himself in the wisdom, in the majesty, in the power of Jesus Christ, but he glorifies himself rather in the Cross of Christ. What the philosophers are ashamed of before men is the glory of the great Apostle—the Cross." (Serm. XX, de verb. Apost.) "Looking," says St. Paul to the Hebrews (chapter xii, verse 2) "on Jesus, the author and finisher of faith, who having joy set before him, endured the Cross, despising the shame and now sitteth on the right hand of the throne of God." By His Cross, Jesus is now seated at the right hand of His eternal Father, and this glory is promised to all who, not being ashamed of His Cross but revering and loving it, take the Cross up and follow Him.

TRIUMPH OF THE CROSS

St. Paul writes to the Colossians (chapter i, verse 20): "And through him to reconcile all things unto himself, making peace through the blood of his Cross, both as to the things that are on earth and the things that are in heaven." And in chapter second, verse 14, of the same epistle, he says: "Blotting out the hand-writing of the decree that was against us, which was contrary to us. And he hath taken the same out of the way, fastening it to the Cross."

"And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all things to myself." (St. John, xii, 32.)

"O admirable power of the Cross," exclaims St. Leo, "ineffable glory of the passion. On Calvary we see the tribunal of the Lord, the judgment of the world, and the power of Jesus crucified. Yes, O Lord, you will draw all to you; in the very hour that you will extend your hands toward an incredulous people who outrage you, the whole world will turn to your Cross to bless you. You will draw all to you, at the very moment when, in execration of the crime of the Jews, all the elements will revolt, the sun will be darkened, the earth will be shaken to its very center, the rocks will be rent in twain, and the graves will give up their dead. You will draw all to you; the veil of the temple will be torn aside, the holy of

holies will be taken from the unworthy pontiffs, and the old law will give way to the new." (Serm. VII de Pass.) By virtue of the Cross the demons are put to flight, the sick are healed, the blind see, the deaf hear, the dumb speak, the lame walk, the storms abate, the dead are brought back to life.

"And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all things to myself."

It was on the Cross that Christ was declared king. "There was above his head," writes the Evangelist St. Luke, "an inscription in Greek, in Latin, and in Hebrew, in these words: 'This is the King of the Jews.'" (xxiii, 38.) Then the chief priests of the Jews said to Pilate, 'Write not, the King of the Jews': but that he said, 'I am the King of the Jews'. Pilate answered: 'What I have written, I have written.' " (John xix, 21-22.) Jesus is therefore declared King upon the Cross; it is so written and this for all time.

"And through him to reconcile all things unto himself, making peace through the blood of his Cross, both as to the things that are on the earth and the things that are in heaven." (St. Paul, to Col. i, 20.)

The Cross surmounts the temples of the Christians to draw worshippers to the house of God; it is placed on the tombs of the dead to remind us

of the glorious resurrection. What wonder then that the Catholic Church holds in respect the Cross of Christ. It is dear to the Catholic heart, since it has come down from Apostolic times wreathed with a halo of power and wisdom and everywhere wearing the crown of victory. The Church can not trample upon what the followers of the Crucified cherished. She may not relegate to obscurity that Cross which Holy Scripture holds up for our veneration. Did she do so, she would be no better than those of whom the Apostle says: "For many walk of whom I have told you often, and now tell you weeping, that they are enemies of the Cross of Christ." (Phil. iii, 18.)

True to the practice of the Apostles and the teachings of the Scriptures, the Catholic Church honors the Cross of Christ.

CHAPTER X

THE BIBLE AND EXTREME UNCTION

No one who will take the pains to study the life of the Divine Savior as related to us in Holy Scripture, can fail to find uppermost in His works and words His great mercy.

Throughout the whole course of His earthly pilgrimage, His mercy to man in his miseries is shown at almost every step. When heaven was closed, the earth was accursed, and man was reprobate; no power of his could reach the throne of mercy. One voice there was, however, that found favor with Infinite Justice. It was the voice of God's well beloved Son.

From all eternity He spoke that gracious word of mercy: "Behold I come." There was no one else to speak it, for none other could find favor in God's sight. What blessings did not our merciful Redeemer bring with Him when He descended to earth!

His sacred feet blessed it when first they rested upon it. How often did they not track it with blessings in His patient wanderings after those who had strayed from His voice. His knees

blessed it, as He knelt in prayer for us to His Eternal Father. And His whole divine frame blessed it and embraced it when prostrate in Gethsemani. He has breathed upon the air, tempering its fierceness and threatenings. The waters of the earth He has blessed to such a degree that they may be said to run in blessings. The same may be said of every element of the earth, which in His sacraments He has brought into contact with His divine grace; its grain, its wine, its oil, even its trees have been signally blessed, for since He died upon a tree, the noblest to be found is ever selected for a cross.

The sacraments which He instituted, embrace the full span of man's life from the cradle to the grave. Through these channels of divine grace He dispenses the favors of His mercy in the blessings they convey to man's soul. Mercy fell from His lips in unceasing benefits, and it was administered by His hands in a thousand ways unto all who were burdened and came to Him for comfort.

His Sacred Heart never refused a grace when appealed to by saint or sinner; His mission upon earth was for both. Ere He returned to the bosom of His heavenly Father, His mercy found a way to perpetuate itself among men. It moved Him to institute the sacraments which are as rivers of His graces which flow into the hearts

and souls of men. There is baptism for the infant just born into the world, that through its purifying waters it may be cleansed from the stain of original sin; there are penance and the holy Eucharist for the child who has reached the age of discretion; then confirmation, holy orders and matrimony for more mature life, through which graces are imparted to each one according as he is called of God to serve Him in this life, and finally the sacrament of extreme unction for the aged and infirm who are nearing eternity and may at any moment pass beyond the confines of time to enter the never-ending ages of life eternal.

In every stage and in every condition of life, His sacraments assist us, that we may avail ourselves of His promise of salvation, and, as His co-heirs through His mercy, enter with Him into the joys of Paradise. When by disease or old age the infirmities to which our body is subject have undermined our one time robust constitution, when there is need of greater vigilance upon our part to keep ourselves free from all guilt in the sight of God, when it behooves us to put our conscience in order, when the supreme moment of dissolution nears, He, in His infinite mercy, has provided for us the means to persevere to the end through the graces He bestows upon us in the sacrament of extreme unction.

"Is any man sick among you? Let him bring

in the priests of the Church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer of faith shall save the sick man: And the Lord shall raise him up: and if he be in sins, they shall be forgiven him." (James v, 14-15.) He bids us to call in the anointed of the Lord when we are in danger of death by sickness, that he may pray over us and anoint us with oil in the name of the Lord. This He ordains that the prayer of faith may save the sick person, and that the Lord may raise him up, if pleasing to His holy will, and that the sins of the sick one may be forgiven him. What love, what mercy upon the part of Jesus for us poor mortals. In infancy He blesses us through the graces of the sacrament of baptism; in our more virile age He fills our hearts with His favors, the sacraments of penance, holy Eucharist, confirmation, holy orders and matrimony, while in the throes of death, His Sacred Heart opens up to us the treasures of His mercy in the sacrament of extreme unction.

"Is any man sick among you? Let him bring in the priests of the Church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer of faith shall save the sick man. And the Lord shall raise him up: and if he be in sins they shall be forgiven him."

Who follows this divine injunction of calling

in the priest of God in the hour of sickness, that he pray over them and anoint them with oil in the name of the Lord? None save the faithful children of the Catholic Church. She alone holds fast to this teaching of the Bible and responds to the unbounded mercy of the Sacred Heart of Jesus in administering through her priests the sacrament of extreme unction to the sick and infirm.

CHAPTER XI

THE BIBLE AND CONFIRMATION

WHEN the hour had come in which our Lord was about to take leave of His Apostles and ascend into heaven, He spoke thus to them: "You shall receive the power of the Holy Ghost coming upon you, and you shall be witnesses unto me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria and even to the uttermost parts of the earth." (Acts i, 8.) Presently "a cloud received him out of their sight." (Acts i, 9.) And he disappeared from their midst into heaven.

The Apostles returned to Jerusalem from Mount Olivet, from which place our Lord ascended to His Father, shut themselves up in an upper room, and there prayed for the coming of the Holy Ghost. They had not long to wait, for after ten days, on Pentecost Sunday, "They were all together in one place: And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a mighty wind coming, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. And there appeared to them parted tongues as it were fire, and it sat upon every one of them: and they were all filled with

the Holy Ghost, and they began to speak with divers tongues, according as the Holy Ghost gave them to speak.” (Acts ii, 1-4.)

The coming of the Holy Ghost upon the Apostles wrought a very marked change in them. Prior to His coming the bravest among them trembled at the word of a woman servant, but now they are intrepid and withstand the severest attacks of the most wicked one, and the fury of nefarious men, who have conspired against the crucified Nazarene and His divine teachings. With the coming of the Holy Ghost, the Apostles received, with the plenitude of light, the plenitude of courage. They are now true followers of Jesus Christ, perfect Christians. While the descent of the Holy Ghost upon the Apostles was exceptional both in its manner and its results, it established what our Lord had determined upon to increase the influence of His Holy Spirit in those who are baptized in the Church, through the sacrament of confirmation. In this sacrament, by the imposition of hands of the bishop, we are made strong and perfect Christians and soldiers of Jesus Christ.

In baptism we are born to a new spiritual life, in confirmation we are made perfect in our spiritual regeneration. “The perfection of this spiritual strength,” says St. Thomas, “consists properly in having the courage to confess our faith in

Jesus Christ, openly in the presence of the world, without shame or fear; since this encouragement banishes all disordinate apprehension. For this reason, the sacrament that gives to the Christian this spiritual courage makes him in a way the defender and soldier of the faith in Christ Jesus. And just as those who battle for the interests of their king, carry his standard, so those who receive the sacrament of confirmation are marked with the standard of Jesus Christ, that is, with the sign of the cross, with which He fought and conquered." (Summa contra gent., lib. iv, c. 60.)

They who deny that Christ instituted the sacrament of confirmation close their eyes voluntarily to the light of the Gospel. The Holy Scriptures positively state that the Apostles imposed hands on those who had been baptized and thereby imparted to them the Holy Ghost. "Now, when the Apostles, who were in Jerusalem, had heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John. Who, when they were come, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost. For he was not as yet come upon any one of them; but they were only baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. Then they laid their hands upon them, and they received the Holy Ghost." (Acts viii, 14-17.)

In this passage of the Acts of the Apostles it is clear that a different institution than that of baptism is spoken of, since it was administered to those who were already baptized by Philip the deacon; that it was conferred by the imposition of the hands, not of him who baptized them, but of the Apostles Peter and John, and this they did that those newly baptized might receive the Holy Ghost to make them strong and perfect Christians and soldiers of Jesus Christ. In speaking of the Samaritans whom Philip the deacon had baptized and the Apostles Peter and John confirmed, St. Cyprian writes: "The same is done to-day among us. Those who are baptized in the Church are presented to the Bishop, in order that by our prayer and imposition of hands they may receive the Holy Ghost and become perfect with the sign of the Cross." (Epist. lxxiii, 11-19.)

To add more to what we have written concerning the sacrament of confirmation is scarcely necessary. Christian tradition on the subject is so conclusive that those who do not abuse it must of necessity admit that the sacrament of confirmation was instituted by Christ and practised in the Church from her first institution, just as it is to-day, and that it comes from the Apostles through Jesus Christ, their divine Master and ours. Confirmation is therefore one of the seven

sacraments instituted by the Divine Founder of Christianity, and the Catholic Church, in teaching and practising what is from the beginning and scriptural, is the Church of the Bible.

CHAPTER XII

THE BIBLE AND THE HOLY EUCHARIST

THE Holy Eucharist is the center of all the Sacraments and the source of the supernatural life which flows through the whole body of the Church.

The other sacraments are, so to speak, transient and pass with the action by which they are effected, but the Holy Eucharist is permanent, the Emmanuel or God with us. It is the heart and soul of Christianity.

Eliminate it from the Church of Christ and all will become cold, stagnant and lifeless in her. The Sacrament of the Altar is the consummation of the spiritual life, the object of the other sacraments. It binds together the whole order of divine facts through which we are redeemed, for all emanates from and converges towards Jesus Christ really present in the Eucharist. The great aim of Christianity is to give supernal life to man in uniting him with Christ and through Him to God, our Father, in order that all may be cemented in closest bonds. The Holy Eucharist is the sublime source of this intimate union with

Jesus Christ during man's earthly pilgrimage, for in receiving holy Communion, the Christian soul may truly exclaim: "And I live, now not I, but Christ liveth in me." (Gal. ii, 20.)

No teaching of the Church is more definitely set forth in Holy Scripture than that of the real presence of Christ Jesus in the Sacrament of the Altar. Nor is there a doctrine of Christianity that has left such a marked impress upon the life of the primitive Church, which all regard as a faithful echo of the teachings of the humble Nazarene.

The Holy Scriptures record in the first place the promise made by our Lord, that He would give Himself to us in this great mystery of His love. He had just miraculously fed a vast concourse of people with five loaves and two fishes. On this occasion He spoke to the Jews, who followed Him, of a bread that would not perish like the material bread, but which would give eternal life, and this bread the Son of man would give them. "Labor not for the meat which perisheth, but for that which endureth unto life everlasting, which the Son of man will give you." (John vi, 27.)

He rouses their attention and seeks to lift their minds and hearts above the mere senses and worldly interests; then telling them of the true manna, which will give everlasting life to those

who partake of it, he adds: "I am the bread of life. Your fathers did eat manna in the desert and are dead. This is the bread which cometh down from heaven; that if any man eat of it he may not die. I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If any man eat of this bread he shall live forever, and the bread that I will give, is my flesh, for the life of the world. The Jews therefore strove among themselves saying: How can this man give us his flesh to eat? Then Jesus said to them: Amen, amen, I say unto you: except you eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, you shall not have life in you. He that eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, hath everlasting life; and I will raise him up in the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed; and my blood is drink indeed. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, abideth in me and I in him. As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father, so he that eateth me, the same also shall live by me. This is the bread that came down from heaven. Not as your fathers did eat manna and are dead. He that eateth this bread shall live forever. These things he said, teaching in the synagogue, in Capharnaum. Many of his disciples, hearing it, said: This saying is hard, and who can hear it." (John vi, 48-61.)

Could Christ teach in more lucid, positive terms, the mystery of His real presence in the Eucha-

rיסט, as our Catholic faith understands it? The Jews who listened to our Savior's words on this all-absorbing subject, understood Him not in a figurative sense, but that He intended in very truth to give them His flesh to eat and His blood to drink. Knowing not how this great mystery was to operate, they cry out in wonderment: "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?" (John vi, 53.)

The Savior knows well what meaning the Jews attach to His words. He sees that they turn their back upon Him, and will not walk with Him. Does He call them to return? Does He tell them that they are mistaken, that they have misunderstood Him? Far from it. He lays greater stress on what He said to them, He impresses upon them more strongly still that His flesh is to be the food and His blood the drink of those who believe in Him.

"Many," says the Holy Scripture, "therefore, of his disciples, hearing it, said: this saying is hard, and who can hear it." (John vi, 61.) Jesus was aware of the fact that many of His disciples murmured at what He said to them, yet He does not change or retract one word of what He had announced to them. "Then Jesus said to the twelve: Will you also go away? And Simon Peter answered him: Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal

life. And we have believed and have known that thou art the Christ, the Son of God." (John vi, 68 sqq.)

This is the language of faith. The Apostles understood no more than the multitude of the Jews in what way our Savior intended to give them His blood to drink and His flesh to eat, but they did know that He was God, and this was all they needed to know to believe in Him. They submit humbly to His teaching and confess through St. Peter that His word is the word of eternal life.

Our Lord did certainly promise that He would give Himself as food and drink in the sacrament of His love to all who have faith in Him.

We now pass to the fulfilment of this promise, as it is reported for us in the Gospels of Sts. Matthew, Mark and Luke and in the First Epistle of St. Paul to the Corinthians.

On the eve of His death, towards nightfall, our Savior was at table with the twelve Apostles, one of whom was to betray Him that very night.

"And whilst they were at supper, Jesus took bread, and blessed and broke; and gave to his disciples, and said: Take ye and eat. This is my body. And taking the chalice, he gave thanks and gave to them, saying: Drink ye all of this. For this is my blood of the New Testament, which

shall be shed for many unto the remission of sins.”
(Matt. xxvi, 26-28.)

“And whilst they were eating, Jesus took bread; and blessing, broke and gave to them, and said: Take ye; this is my body. And having taken the chalice, giving thanks, he gave it to them. And they all drank of it. And he said to them: This is my blood of the New Testament, which shall be shed for many.” (Mark xiv, 22-24.)

“And when the hour was come he sat down, and the twelve Apostles with him. And he said to them: With desire I have desired to eat this pasch with you, before I suffer. For I say to you, that from this time I shall not eat it, till it be fulfilled in the Kingdom of God. And having taken the chalice he gave thanks and said: Take ye and divide it among you: For I say to you, that I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, till the Kingdom of God come. And taking bread, he gave thanks, and broke, and gave to them saying: This is my body, which is given for you. Do this for a commemoration of me. In like manner the chalice also, after he had supped, saying: This is the chalice, the New Testament in my blood, which shall be shed for you.” (Luke xxii, 14-20.)

To the narrative of the Evangelists we will add that of St. Paul, who, though not present at the last supper, was, as he tells us, miraculously informed of it by our Lord. In the following

words he relates to the Corinthians the institution of the Holy Eucharist.

"For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, that the Lord Jesus, the same night in which he was betrayed, took bread, and giving thanks, broke and said: Take ye and eat: this is my body, which shall be delivered for you: this do for the commemoration of me. In like manner also the chalice, after he had supped, saying: This chalice is the New Testament in my blood: this do ye, as often as ye shall drink, for the commemoration of me. For as often as you shall eat this bread, and drink the chalice, you shall show the death of the Lord, until he come. Therefore whosoever shall eat this bread, or drink the chalice of the Lord unworthily shall be guilty of the body and the blood of the Lord. But let a man prove himself, and so let him eat of the bread, and drink of the chalice. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh judgment to himself, not discerning the body of the Lord."

(I Cor. xi, 23-30.)

The history of the institution of the great mystery of the Holy Eucharist is given identically the same, in substance, by all these writers of Holy Scripture. All of them attribute to Jesus the words which, without the need of any explanation, plainly indicate the transubstantiation of

the bread into His body and of the wine into His blood. His words are so explicit, so clear, so positive, that it is impossible to add anything in the way of commentary on them.

The Church teaches that these words of Christ: "This is my body, this is my blood," are true in their natural, ordinary sense; that therefore in virtue of the infinite power of Him who created all things, they effected at the last supper the change of the substance of bread and of the substance of wine into the substance of the body and blood of the word made flesh, and that by the same power they continue to effect the same change every time they are spoken in His name by the successors of those to whom, He said, "Do this in commemoration of me." (Luke xxii, 19.)

It is manifest to every candid person that the words of the institution of the Holy Eucharist, especially when compared with the words of the promise, allow of no other than the literal meaning.

For the edification of the faithful of the Church, and for the instruction of those without her pale, who give great weight to the teachings of the early Fathers of the Church, it will not be amiss to bring the present discussion on the Holy Eucharist to a close with a few excerpts from the Fathers of the primitive Church.

In the first century we have St. Ignatius, mar-

tyr, a disciple of St. Polycarp, appointed Bishop of Antioch, A. D. 68, martyred, between 98 and 117. In his Epistle ad Smyrn. n. 7, he denounces the Docetae because "they abstain from the Eucharist and prayer, because they confess not that the Eucharist is the flesh of our Savior, Jesus Christ, who suffered for our sins, which the Father in His mercy raised again."

In the second century, Tertullian, born 160, in his "Resurrection of the Dead," n. 8, page 330, writes on the same subject: "The flesh is fed with the body and blood of Christ, that the soul may be fattened of God."

In the third century, St. Cyprian writes (*De Lapsis*, sect. 1): "Your mouths, which have been sanctified with the food of heaven and with the body and blood of Christ, would not after that defile themselves with the impure remnants of meat offered to idols."

The accumulated testimony of the early Fathers, the decrees of councils and the tradition of all the ages of the Church is in perfect harmony with the plain words of the Bible; all of them, from Apostolic times down, proclaim in the strongest language possible, that the Holy Scriptures teach unmistakably that Jesus Christ instituted the Holy Eucharist and that He is really and substantially present, body, blood, soul, and divinity in this great mystery of His love.

CHAPTER XIII

THE BIBLE AND THE SACRIFICE OF THE MASS

SACRIFICE and religion go hand in hand. Sacrifice is an integral part of the worship we owe the Creator.

Sacrifices existed under the natural and Mosaic laws, but they were the shadow or figure only of the August Sacrifice, which was to be offered to an outraged Almighty Being, in the person of the Son of God, become man to appease the wrath of His Father against a wicked, sinful world. The Sacrifice of the Mass is not a new sacrifice different from that of Calvary, but the same sacrifice offered in an unbloody manner and which is to continue during all ages of time.

There are those who profess to believe in the Sacrifice of Calvary and to accept its promised atonement, yet their conception is that it all ended on Calvary and from there its power and virtue are now distributed through all generations. This is to make the Sacrifice of the Cross a mere historic fact, imbedded in the past, holding its place in history along with other facts of the age in which it occurred. This notion does not express the teaching of God's Church, nor was it the be-

lief of any one calling himself a Christian for hundreds of years, until reason began to meddle with the things of faith. The wisdom of God did not leave the sacrifice of the Cross, where human reason is disposed to leave it, but in the Sacrifice of the Mass, He made it move along with the march of time and the advance of each generation.

Priest and Victim and Sacrifice of Calvary are all reproduced in the Sacrifice of the Altar, making it like Christ Himself, "the same yesterday, to-day and forever," to the consummation of the world.

The Sacrifice of the Mass is identical with the Sacrifice of Calvary, with the single difference which every Catholic child learns with the elements of his faith, that one is the bloody, the other the unbloody Sacrifice of Christ.

It is all mystery, to be sure, but so is the Sacrifice of Calvary, and so is everything associated with the work of our redemption. What reason, then, for accepting one mystery and not the other, when both are equally objects of divine faith, both emanations of God's wisdom, the one the perpetual and, as it were, practical application of the other.

God spoke to the Jews by the prophet Malachias, who was the last of the ancient prophets and who lived near the time of the coming of the

Messias. "I have no pleasure in you, saith the Lord of hosts: and I will not receive a gift of your hand." (Mal. i, 10.) The reason is this: "For from the rising of the sun even to the going down, my name is great among the Gentiles, and in every place there is sacrifice, and there is offered to my name a clean oblation: for my name is great among the Gentiles, saith the Lord of hosts." (Mal. i, 11.)

The prophet evidently speaks here of the sacrifice of the Cross and of that of the Altar, for since our Savior was immolated on the Cross, there is no other sacrifice, and this one is offered daily and hourly everywhere.

Jesus Christ having sacrificed Himself voluntarily, all other sacrifices, not being acceptable in the sight of God, ceased to be offered.

St. Paul, speaking of Christ, writes to the Hebrews: "Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith sacrifice and oblation thou wouldest not: but a body thou hast fitted to me: Holocausts for sin did not please thee. . . . Then said I: behold, I come to do thy will, O God: he taketh away the first, that he may establish that which followeth." (Heb. x, 5, 6, 9.)

God was not satisfied with the victims, oblations, holocausts, or sacrifices obtained under the old law. The Messias, the Redeemer comes to do the will of Him who sent Him, His Father;

that is, to be immolated on Calvary first, and then perpetuated for all time, and that daily on our altar, the remembrance and sacrifice of Calvary.

The Sacrifice of Calvary replaces all the ancient sacrifices, being infinitely above them all: they were but the figure, His is the real sacrifice. Hence all the sacrifices of the law of Moses have disappeared with their temple and priests.

Jesus Christ is our Victim, our Sacrifice; Christ "delivered himself for us, an oblation and a sacrifice to God for an odor of sweetness." (Eph. v, 2.)

The Sacrifice of the Mass is the sacrifice of the body and blood of Jesus Christ, truly present on the altar under the appearances of bread and wine. It is a memorial of the passion and death of Jesus Christ, who said to His Apostles: "This do for a commemoration of me." (Luke xxii, 19.) It is the same sacrifice as that of Calvary, unbloody it is true, but possessing the same efficacy.

The priest and victim are the same: on the Cross, Jesus was both priest and victim: so is He at the altar.

St. Paul says: "For it was fitting that we should have such a high priest, holy, innocent, undefiled, separated from sinners, and made higher than the heavens. Who needeth not daily (as the other priests) to offer sacrifices first for

his own sins, and then for the people's: for this he did once in offering himself." (Heb. vii, 26-27.) Jesus Christ therefore in offering Himself a living victim to His heavenly Father for the sins of the world, "is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for those of the whole world." (I John ii, 2.) And he was heard by reason of His dignity and the veneration due Him, as St. Paul writes: He "was heard for his reverence." (Heb. v, 7.)

The Sacrifice of the Mass is the bloodless sacrifice of the body and blood of Jesus Christ offered to God for our sins. It is a commemoration and a continuance of the oblation of Christ on the Cross. "Christ our pasch is sacrificed." (I Cor. v, 7.) Even the altar on which this sacrifice is offered is spoken of by the Apostle: "We have an altar, whereof they have no power to eat that serve the tabernacle." (Heb. xiii, 10.) On this altar the death of the Savior is perpetually shown: "For as often as you shall eat this bread and drink the chalice, you shall shew the death of the Lord, until he come." (I Cor. xi, 26.)

In the Gospel of St. Luke we read: "And taking bread, he gave thanks, and brake, and gave to them, saying: This is my body, which is given for you. Do this for a commemoration of me. In like manner the chalice also, after he had supped, saying: This is the chalice of the New

Testament in my blood, which shall be shed for you." (Luke xxii, 19-20.)

St. Paul in his first epistle to the Corinthians makes mention twice of the words: "Do this for a commemoration of me"; in the first instance: "For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, that the Lord Jesus, the same night in which he was betrayed, took bread, and giving thanks, broke and said, Take ye and eat: this is my body, which shall be delivered for you; this do for the commemoration of me." (xi, 23-24.) And again, "In like manner also the chalice, . . . saying: This chalice is the New Testament in my blood: this do ye, as often as ye shall drink, for the commemoration of me." (xi, 25.)

By these words Christ conferred upon His Apostles and their successors to the end of time the powers of the priesthood of the New Testament; hence the teaching of the Church, as defined in the Council of Trent: "If any one saith that by those words: 'Do this for a commemoration of me' (Luke xxii, 19), Christ did not institute the Apostles priests, or did not ordain that they and other priests should offer His own body and blood; let him be anathema." (Sess. xxii, Can. 2.)

St. Paul explains this commemoration of Christ when he says: "For as often as you shall

eat this bread and drink the chalice, you shall show the death of the Lord, until he come." (I Cor. xi, 26.) In the tenth chapter, verses 14 to 21 of the same epistle, the Apostle clearly refers to the practice of the Apostles, in offering the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. "Wherefore, my dearly beloved, fly from the service of idols. I speak as to wise men: judge ye yourselves what I say. The chalice of benediction which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? And the bread which we break, is it not the partaking of the body of the Lord? For we, being many, are one bread, one body, all that partake of one bread. Behold Israel according to the flesh: are not they that eat of the sacrifices partakers of the altar? What then? Do I say, that what is offered in sacrifice to idols, is anything? Or that the idol is anything? But the things which the heathens sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils and not to God. And I would not that you should be made partakers with devils. You cannot drink the chalice of the Lord, and the chalice of the devils: you cannot be partakers of the table of the Lord, and of the table of the devils."

The Bible teaches plainly, as the portions I have quoted from it conclusively prove, that the Sacrifice of Calvary was foreshadowed by the Sacrifices of the Old Law, that the Sacrifice of the Altar was foretold by Malachias, the prophet,

that Christ did institute it at the last supper when He changed the bread into His body and the wine into His blood, ordaining the Apostles priests, bidding them to "do this in commemoration of me," and that through their successors the bishops and priests of the Church, it was to be perpetuated till time should be no more.

While the bloody sacrifice of Calvary is man's work as well as God's, it is God's wisdom alone that has continued it in an unbloody manner upon our altars, as the Holy Scriptures declare. He has placed it in our midst, that every blessing it has brought may flow at once into our hearts and our homes. At the Holy Mass, the penitent may strike his breast in compunction and feel that the pardon he asks will be granted. Those burdened with trials and sorrows of life, may sink them all in the far greater trials and sorrows of a dying Redeemer. The aged will come to the Mass for that peace the world has never given them; the strong man will come for a strength that is divine, and all, for goodness and blessing; for Christ "the giver of every good gift," is verily with us, as the Bible plainly declares, through the Sacrifice of the Altar.

CHAPTER XIV

THE BIBLE AND HOLY ORDERS

FROM the teachings of Holy Scripture we learn that Christ instituted the sacrament of the Holy Eucharist and perpetuated the Sacrifice of Calvary in the Sacrifice of the Mass. These ordainments of the Son of God are only possible through a priesthood.

Sacrifice and priesthood are correlative. Under the natural law, the heads of families were priests. Under the Mosaic law, God Himself made choice of the family of Aaron to offer sacrifices.

In the New Testament, Christ gathered around Him His Apostles, whom He ordained priests, giving to them the power to ordain others, who in turn would lay hands on others, that His priesthood might be perpetuated to the end of the world.

The relation that exists between the sacrifice and the priesthood is clearly set out in the epistle of St. Paul to the Hebrews: "For every high priest taken from among men, is ordained for men in the things that appertain to God, that he may offer up gifts and sacrifices for sin." (v, 1.)

Christ did not ordain all Christians to the priesthood. The Scriptures explain fully that He bestowed this power on His Apostles alone. Only to them did He give the power of offering the Sacrifice and of remitting sin. He selected them from among men and conferred on them the sacrament of holy orders. It was at the last supper that He ordained them priests, when He said to them: "Do this for a commemoration of me." (Luke xxii, 19.) Do what? Do what I have just done. Take bread, bless and change it into My body; take wine, bless and change it into My blood. The power to forgive sin, He gave to them, when after His resurrection He said to them: "Peace be to you; as the Father hath sent me, I also send you. When he had said this, He breathed on them and He said to them: Receive ye the Holy Ghost. Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them: and whose sins you shall retain, they are retained." (John xx, 21, 22, 23.)

The priesthood is for all time because the sacrifice is to be perpetual; the necessity of remitting the sins of men is to last to the end of the world, and the abiding presence of the Church on earth is to remain for all ages.

Holy Orders is, therefore, a Sacrament instituted by Jesus Christ, as the Bible teaches us: All agree that a sacrament is an outward sign of

inward grace ordained by Christ. The outward sign of the sacrament of Holy Orders we have in the imposition of hands. "These they set before the Apostles; and they praying imposed hands upon them." (Acts vi, 6.)

"Impose not hands lightly upon any man." (I Tim. v, 22.)

"Then they, fasting and praying and imposing their hands upon them." (Acts xiii, 3.)

"And when they had ordained to them priests in every church and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord, in whom they believed." (Acts xiv, 22.) This ordaining was done by the extending or imposing of hands, as is evident from the Greek text: "*χειροτονήσαντες . . . πρεσβυτέρους.*" (Acts xiv, 22.)

Finally it is of divine institution. The power rested solely with Christ to establish a rite which would not merely signify but would really give grace. As it is certain that the Apostles did use an outward sign to which grace was annexed, it follows that they exercised this sublime ministry in the name of God and by the command of our Divine Lord. The Bible declares that grace is imparted by the outward sign of the sacrament of holy orders.

"Neglect not that grace that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with imposition of the hands of the priesthood." (I Tim. iv, 14.)

“For which cause I admonish thee that thou stir up the grace of God which is in thee by the imposition of my hands.” (II Tim. i, 6.) The Holy Scriptures reveal to us the operation of the Holy Ghost in connection with the sacrament of holy orders.

“And as they were ministering to the Lord and fasting, the Holy Ghost said to them: Separate me Paul and Barnabas, for the work whereunto I have taken them. Then they, fasting and praying, and imposing their hands upon them, sent them away. So they being sent by the Holy Ghost went to Seleucia, and from thence they sailed to Cyprus.” (Acts xiii, 2, 3, 4.)

Again, “Take heed to yourselves, and to the whole flock, wherein the Holy Ghost hath placed you bishops to rule the Church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.” (Acts xx, 28.)

Every element essential to a sacrament is contained in holy orders, the outward sign, the internal grace and the institution by Christ. The Bible’s teachings are, therefore, adhered to strictly in the Catholic Church by the presence in her of the priesthood.

CHAPTER XV

THE BIBLE AND THE SACRAMENT OF PENANCE

AFTER His resurrection our Lord instituted the sacrament of penance.

In bestowing on His Apostles and their successors the power of forgiving the sins of men, Christ followed the practice He adopted on former occasions, when about to confer some great power on them. He first cleared the way and prepared the understanding of His Apostles for it.

We read in St. Luke how the poor publican went down to his home justified, rather than the proud Pharisee; for the former, standing afar off, would not so much as lift up his eyes toward heaven; but struck his breast, saying: "O God be merciful to me, a sinner." (xviii, 13.)

The Savior brought the woman of Samaria to confess her sins: "I have no husband." And Jesus said: "Thou hast said well, I have no husband." To which she answered not, saying, and implicitly at least confessing her sinfulness, "Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet." (John iv, 17-19.)

What a beautiful example of the avowal of

guilt have we not in the parable of the prodigal son: "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before thee; I am not now worthy to be called thy son." (Luke xv, 21.)

The foregoing examples are evidence that our Redeemer was at all times pleased to forgive the sins of those who confessed them, and by His mercy to the repentant sinner He prepared His disciples for the institution of the sacrament of penance.

The accusation of one's guilt was required by God under the natural law. He exacted it more positively under the written law, and in the New Testament it was ordained by Christ. The Holy Eucharist was first promised and later on instituted by Jesus Christ; so with the sacrament of penance, He promises and afterwards establishes it. The early Christians practised, the Apostles commanded it.

The promise was given to St. Peter when our Lord said to him: "I will give to thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind upon earth, it shall be bound also in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, it shall be loosed also in heaven." (Matt. xvi, 19.)

The same promise He made to all the Apostles: "Amen, I say to you, whatsoever you shall bind upon earth, shall be bound also in heaven: and

whatsoever you shall loose upon earth, shall be loosed also in heaven." (Matt. xviii, 18.) This was said to them before our Lord suffered and died upon the Cross.

Shortly after His resurrection He made good His promise to them when He instituted the sacrament of penance, wherein this power is especially exercised.

"Now, when it was late that same day, the first of the week, and the doors were shut where the disciples were gathered together, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood in the midst, and said to them: Peace be to you. And when he had said this, he showed them his hands and his side. The disciples therefore were glad when they saw the Lord. And he said to them again: Peace be to you. As the Father hath sent me I also send you. When he had said this, he breathed on them, and he said to them: Receive ye the Holy Ghost. Whose sins you shall forgive they are forgiven them: and whose sins you shall retain, they are retained." (John xx, 20-23.)

These words are clear. Christ does not say, God will forgive those their sins to whom you will declare they are forgiven; but He states positively, "Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them; and whose sins you shall retain, they are retained." The Apostles are appointed judges. The absolution they will give, will con-

vey grace directly. Christ does not make exception of any sin, His language is general, the power given is universal, they can forgive or retain all sins.

In instituting the sacrament of penance, Christ did not specifically mention confession, at least in what is reported by the Evangelist. But this was not called for, because confession existed and was generally practised by the Jews. "Say to the children of Israel: When a man or woman shall have committed any of all the sins that men are wont to commit, and by negligence shall have transgressed the commandment of the Lord, and offended, they shall confess their sin." (Num. v, 6-7.) A particular and well-defined confession is here indicated.

The Apostles knew the precept of confession, they knew, as did their co-religionists, that there was no true repentance without an humble and contrite confession of sin. Besides, the very words of our Redeemer demand a confession for the remission of sin.

Could the Apostles, or the bishops and priests of the Church retain sin, if we can at will overlook the ministry of the priesthood in this matter, and thereby disregard the obligation of submitting to the tribunal of penance matters that belong to its jurisdiction and have been placed within its pale by the authority of God Himself?

How otherwise could His solemn injunction be verified, "Whose sins you shall retain, they are retained." What is more, I would call your attention to the fact that the Bible does not say, whose sins God shall forgive are forgiven, but "whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them."

Now who are they to whom Christ addresses Himself? Evidently the Apostles and their successors in office, the bishops and priests of the Church. To elucidate still more thoroughly what a great misapprehension some labor under when they claim that nothing more is required for the forgiveness of wrong-doing than to confess it in secret to God alone, I would ask, to whom does it belong to lay down the conditions for obtaining pardon of sin; to God or to the offender? The answer cannot but be: it certainly belongs to God. Well and good, God has laid down His conditions, and among them is the very one of confessing our sins to a priest whom He has by His divine power appointed one of His "ministers of reconciliation." (II Cor. v, 18.)

The Apostles explain that the power of forgiving or retaining sin was given to them by Christ. "All things," they write, "are of God, who hath reconciled us to Himself by Jesus Christ and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation. . . . For Christ, therefore, we are ambassadors, God,

as it were, exhorting by us. For Christ, we beseech you, be reconciled to God." (II Cor. v. 18-20.)

To establish further the fact that God did constitute men His "ministers of reconciliation" and clothe them with the power to forgive sin, I here call your attention to the incident related in the Gospels of Matthew, chapter 9th, and Mark, chapter 2nd, where we read of a man sick of the palsy being brought to Jesus to be healed.

A great concourse of people had gathered at the place, and also many scribes, to witness the wonderful works of Jesus. Seeing the man sick of the palsy, Jesus said to him: "Be of good heart, son, thy sins are forgiven thee." The scribes present, on hearing these words of the Savior, murmur and think evil of him in their hearts, saying to themselves: "He blasphemeth." Who can forgive sin but God only? The multitude on the contrary are glad and rejoice that God has given the power of forgiving sins to man. For in the presence of all Jesus performed a miracle to confirm His teaching that God had given to man such power.

From the words of institution of the sacrament of penance it is apparent that the power exercised by the priests is judicial in its character, consequently that before pronouncing sentence they must know the state of the case.

In other words, before forgiving or retaining they must know what it is they are to forgive and what it is they are to retain. Otherwise the administering of the Sacrament would be, on their part, a blind exercise of power, and, therefore, just as likely to be wrong as right. In this light has it been held and practised in the Church from the time Christ said to His Apostles: "Whose sins you shall forgive; they are forgiven them; and whose sins you shall retain, they are retained," to the present day, which is the best argument of its obligation. "Confess," writes St. James, "your sins one to another." (James v, 16.)

The early Christians understood the doctrine of confession just as the Church holds it to-day; for "many of them that believed came confessing and declaring their deeds." (Acts xix, 18.)

"If we confess our sins," says St. John, "He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all iniquity." (I John i, 9.)

Though I could give excerpts from nearly every Father of the Church discussing the subject of confession, I will limit myself to one, which expresses the teaching of all the others.

St. John Chrysostom, who died in the year 407, writes: "Weak creatures, placed on this miserable earth to be called to the dispensation of the things of heaven, to receive a power not given

to angel or archangel! For not to them was it said, whatsoever you shall bind on earth, shall be bound also in heaven, and whatsoever you shall loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven. The princes of this world have power only over the bodies of men, but this power extends to spiritual bonds, and its effects reach even to heaven. The sentence pronounced by the priest on earth God ratifies in the mansions of glory and confirms it with His seal. He has clothed His ministers with His own power. Whose sins ye shall remit, shall be remitted, and whose sins ye shall retain, shall be retained. Can you conceive power greater than this? It is written that the Father has given all power of judgment to His Son; this power, I say, He has equally communicated to His priests." (De sacerdotio, lib. iii, c. 5.)

If, then, there ever was a practice that in its origin, its extension, its continuance, proved that it was divine, assuredly that practice is confession. It is founded, apart from the most positive Scriptural declaration, on history, tradition and the unanimous teaching and universal practice of the Church in every age of her existence.

CHAPTER XVI

THE BIBLE AND BAPTISM

A TRUE Christian knowledge of the real necessity of baptism would avert many grave wrongdoings. But as the years pass by, effecting a wider chasm between the days of the so-called reformation and the present generation, the teachings of the Divine Master deposited in the bosom of His Church have become, little by little, meaningless to those without her pale, whose hearts and minds are no longer guided or taught by the "faith once delivered to the saints," which they alter or reject altogether as fancy sways them.

Whilst some there are who still hold to a certain perfunctory administration of baptism, the greater number are in no way concerned about it. In consequence of this blameworthy apathy, untold misdeeds are committed against God, society and the interests of immortal souls. Indeed, baptism is not given a thought in cases where, by dealing death to a child yet unborn, it may perchance save the life of another, or when it is done to hide guilt and shame. Two heinous

crimes are thus perpetrated for convenience sake in the name, forsooth, of humanitarianism, without the least inquietude of conscience, the murder of a child and the depriving of a soul of the grace of regeneration, which would entitle it to the kingdom of heaven.

Those, even, who still cling to baptism, consider it no more than a mere ceremony, having no intrinsic merit and giving no grace to the soul, only an empty religious formality.

Did not God command circumcision to Abraham on account of original sin, in order to blot out the stain, that relic, which the disobedience of Adam leaves upon the soul?

“This is my covenant which you shall observe, between me and you, and thy seed after thee. All the male kind of you shall be circumcised.”
(Gen. xvii, 10.)

Jesus Christ Himself submitted to circumcision out of humility and to comply with the law of Moses, though there was no reason that bound Him to observe it.

“After eight days were accomplished, that the child should be circumcised, his name was called Jesus.”
(Luke ii, 21.)

“Wherefore as by one man sin entered into this world, and by sin death; and so death passed upon all men, in whom all have sinned.”
(Rom. v, 12.)

All, therefore, even infants, have sinned, but

these could not be guilty of actual sin; they must consequently be born in sin through Adam. The Psalmist acknowledges the existence of original sin: "For behold I was conceived in iniquities; and in sins did my mother conceive me." (Psalm L, 7.)

The envy of Satan brought this curse upon the human race: "But by the envy of the devil, death came into the world." (Wis. ii, 24.)

St. Paul tells us how we contract original sin: "Wherefore as by one man sin entered into this world, and by sin death: and so death passed upon all men, in whom all have sinned." (Rom. v, 12.) All have sinned in Adam, for all men were, so to speak, primitively in this one man, Adam. All are in their origin but this one man. Again we read in the same epistle of St. Paul the following: "But I see another law in my members, fighting against the law of my mind, and captivating me in the law of sin, that is in my members. Unhappy man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death." (Rom. vii, 23-24.)

Now, baptism, according to the Bible, is the means whereby we are cleansed from original sin and from all the sins which we committed before our regeneration. "Rise up," said Ananias to Paul, "and be baptized, and wash away thy sins." (Acts xxii, 16.)

St. Peter leaves no doubt about it, when answering the multitude who, with sorrow in their hearts for crucifying Jesus, asked what they should do to be saved. "Now when they had heard these things, they had compunction in their heart, and said to Peter, and to the rest of the Apostles: What shall we do, men and brethren? But Peter said to them: Do penance and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of your sins." (Acts ii, 37-38.) Our Lord said to His Apostles: "Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations; baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost." (Matt. xxviii, 19.)

A positive command is here given by Christ to His Apostles, to go forth and baptize all nations. They are not left free. It is a law laid down for them and they are required to administer baptism "in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost." They must baptize all, irrespective of age or condition, "all nations."

Evidently there was no doubt in the minds of the Apostles, for the command to baptize "all nations" leaves no opening for doubt that children as well as adults had to receive baptism for the remission of sin.

"And when she was baptized, and her household." (Acts xvi, 15.) "And I baptized also

the household of Stephanus." (I Cor. 1, 16.) "And he, taking them the same hour of the night, washed their stripes, and himself was baptized, and all his house immediately." (Acts xvi, 33.)

"And Crispus, the ruler of the synagogue, believed in the Lord, with all his house; and many of the Corinthians hearing, believed, and were baptized." (Acts xviii, 8.)

The Apostles baptized in these different households all the members, among whom there were children as well as adults, and all were cleansed in the purifying waters of baptism. It is natural that since children inherit the stain of primeval guilt, through the disobedience of Adam, the efficacious merits of Christ must impart to them also those graces which will entitle them to the kingdom of heaven.

Baptism administered by immersion, infusion, or aspersion, is equally valid. When St. Paul, while in prison, baptized his jailer and family, it was only possible by pouring water on or sprinkling them. It is the general belief that it was by aspersion that St. Peter baptized about three thousand souls in one day immediately after the descent of the Holy Ghost upon the Apostles. Neander (General History of the Christian Religion and Church, vol. i, page 429) informs us that the sick and the imprisoned were accustomed to be baptized by pouring or sprinkling, and they

were never afterward rebaptized conditionally.

Nicodemus, a Pharisee, and a ruler of the Jews, comes to our Lord under the cover of night seeking information from Him. "Jesus answered and said to him: Amen, Amen, I say to thee, unless a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." (John iii, 3.) That His interrogator may know that He here speaks of baptism and its obligation He adds: "Amen, Amen, I say to thee, unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." (John iii, 5.)

As in our body we must be born of Adam to contract the guilt of original sin, so, in order to be participants in justification through Jesus Christ, must we be born of Him through the spirit in baptism. "For we are buried together with him by baptism unto death; that as Christ is risen from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we also may walk in newness of life." (Rom. vi, 4.)

Though not definitely determined, it is generally accepted that baptism was instituted by our Lord when He Himself was baptized by John, at which time He gave to the water the power of sanctifying. "The Lord is baptized," says St. Augustine, "not because he had occasion to be cleansed, but by the contact of his pure flesh to purify the waters, and impart to them the power of cleansing." (Serm. 37, de Temp.) The cir-

cumstances which attended the event afford a very strong argument to prove that baptism was then instituted by our Lord.

The three persons of the Blessed Trinity, in whose name baptism is conferred, manifest their august presence:—the voice of God the Father is heard, the Person of God the Son is present, God the Holy Ghost descends in the form of a dove, and the heavens, into which we are enabled to enter by baptism, are thrown open. “And Jesus being baptized, forthwith came out of the water: and lo, the heavens were opened to him: and he saw the Spirit of God descending as a dove, and coming upon him. And behold a voice from heaven saying: This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.” (Matt. iii, 16–17.)

Fervent indeed should be the prayer of every true Christian, that no soul perish without the saving influence of the divine ordinance of baptism, which is so strongly commanded in the teachings of the Bible, that all may come, through it, to the kingdom of heaven.

CHAPTER XVII

THE BIBLE AND MATRIMONY

MATRIMONY is a divine institution. The Holy Scriptures teach us that God blessed the marriage of the first man and the first woman. The providential circumstances that cluster around the first union are especially worthy of the serious and religious consideration of all. The history of it is found in the book of Genesis.

"And the Lord God said: It is not good for man to be alone, let us make him a help like unto himself. And the Lord God having formed out of the ground all the beasts of the earth, and all the fowls of the air, brought them to Adam to see what he would call them; for whatsoever Adam called any living creature the same is its name. And Adam called all the beasts by their names, and all the fowls of the air, and all the cattle of the field; but for Adam there was not found a helper like himself. Then the Lord cast a deep sleep upon Adam: and when he was fast asleep, he took one of his ribs, and filled up flesh for it, and the Lord God built the rib which he took from Adam into a woman and brought her to

Adam. And Adam said; this now is bone of my bones; and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called woman, because she was taken out of man. Wherefore a man shall leave father and mother and shall cleave to his wife; and they shall be two in one flesh.” (Gen. ii, 18-24.)

Having created all living things, God had them to come before Adam, that he might give a name to all of them. This Adam did, but he found not among these living creatures any one like unto himself or that could be to him a helpmate. God therefore sent a deep sleep upon him, took from his side a rib and of it made a woman, whom He also brought before him. On seeing her, Adam exclaimed: “This now is bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called woman,” and because of his wife, man shall leave father and mother, for they shall be two in one flesh. According to the declaration of Christ Himself, as chronicled in the Gospel of St. Matthew, matrimony is hereby shown to be a divine institution. “Therefore now they are not two, but one flesh. What therefore God has joined together, let no man put asunder.” (Matt. xix, 6.)

When God made Adam and from one of his ribs fashioned him a helper in the person of Eve, “He blessed them, saying, Increase and multiply.” (Gen. i, 28.) The ends for which God instituted

marriage are, as disclosed to us in the Bible, mutual help, procreation of children and the holiness of the married life. The Angel of God said to Tobias: "I will show thee who they are over whom the devil can prevail; for they who in such manner receive matrimony, as to shut out God from themselves and from their mind, and to give themselves to their lust, as the horse and mule, which have not understanding, over them the devil hath power." After speaking in this manner the Angel enjoins on him: "Thou shalt take the virgin with fear of the Lord, moved rather for love of children than for lust, that in the seed of Abraham thou mayst obtain a blessing in children." (Tob. vi, sqq.) For this reason did God say to Adam and Eve when He blessed their union, "Increase and multiply."

Against this solemn injunction of the Creator do those commit atrocious crime, who, by unlawful, unholy means seek to prevent the bearing of children or to get rid of them after conception. Is it not of the like that the Angel spoke to Tobias: "For they who in such manner receive matrimony, as to shut out God from themselves and from their mind, and to give themselves to their lust as the horse and mule, which have not understanding, over them the devil hath power." Matrimony is, as it were, an antidote to the licentiousness of ungodly desires. "For

fear," says the Apostle, "of fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband." (I Cor. vii, 2.)

It is of faith that marriage is not only an honorable and pure union between husband and wife, but that it has been raised by the Savior to the dignity of a sacrament. In this belief the Church is supported by the authority of the Holy Bible. "So also ought husbands to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. For no man ever hateth his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, as also Christ doth the church; because we are members of his body, of his flesh and of his bones. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife, and they shall be two in one flesh. This is a great sacrament; but I speak in Christ and in the Church." (Eph. v, 28-32.)

Christian marriage is therefore superior to that of the old dispensation, because it gives grace through the merits of Jesus Christ. Very properly do the Fathers of the Church, the councils and tradition place matrimony among the sacraments instituted by our Lord.

The union of the first man and the first woman prefigured the union of Christ and His Church, but it had no power to confer grace, since the union of Christ and His Church had not yet been sealed. After the union was effected, the sign

was clothed with a virtue not previously possessed.

Throughout the entire portion of St. Paul's epistle to the Ephesians which deals with matrimony, his sole purpose seems to have been that we should comprehend that Christ had deigned to raise it to the dignity of a sacrament.

UNITY OF THE MARRIAGE BOND

Unity of marriage is forcibly urged upon the minds of the Pharisees by our Lord Himself, when He addressed them on the primitive institution of matrimony: "Have you not read, that he who made man from the beginning, made them male and female? For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife, and they two shall be in one flesh. Therefore now they are not two but one flesh." (Matt. xix, 4, 5, 6.) Christ forbids the plurality of wives, declaring that marriage is the union of one man and one woman, who "are not two but one flesh."

INDISSOLUBILITY OF MATRIMONY

The Church has always taught, as of divine faith, that marriage between Christians validly contracted and consummated is indissoluble except by death. No exception to this law is possible. On a certain occasion the Pharisees ap-

proached our Lord, tempting Him, saying, "Is it lawful for a man to put away his wife for every cause?" (Matt. xix, 3.) But Jesus answering them said: "Have you not read that he who made man from the beginning, made them male and female? For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife, and they two shall be in one flesh. . . . What therefore God hath joined together, let no man put asunder." (Matt. xix, 4, 5, 6.) In the plainest terms our Lord impresses upon the minds of His interlocutors that the bond of marriage is indissoluble and that no man dare to put asunder what His heavenly Father hath joined together.

The next question the Pharisees put to Jesus evidently evinces that they understand Him to mean that the bond of matrimony is indissoluble. "They say to him: Why then did Moses command to give a bill of divorce, and to put away?" (Matt. xix, 7.) Christ answers them: "I say to you that whosoever shall put away his wife, except it be for fornication, and shall marry another, committeth adultery; and he that shall marry her that is put away, committeth adultery." (Matt. xix, 9.) Those who have cast from them the sweet yoke of the Church of Christ and who grope far away from the light of the Holy Spirit, claim to find in the words of the Apostle, "except for fornication" a cause for sundering the mar-

riage bond. All know that for fornication a man may put away his wife or a wife her husband, but neither the husband nor the wife can enter into another lawful marriage during the lifetime of the one thus put away. Holy Scripture states positively, as we shall presently unfold, that the one who is put away cannot marry again and that the one that putteth away cannot contract another marriage, and whosoever shall marry the one put away or the one that putteth away—always understood while both live—is guilty of adultery.

Now these words of St. Matthew, “except for fornication,” undoubtedly have reference to the first part of the sentence, indicating that for fornication she may be put away, but the husband is not free to marry another. That this would seem to be the true construction of the words of the Apostle, the teaching of Christ in SS. Luke and Mark and the testimony of St. Paul speaking by the authority of the Divine Master fully attest. For in their teaching no exception whatever is permissible. “Every one that putteth away his wife, and marrieth another, committeth adultery; and he that marrieth her that is put away from her husband, committeth adultery.” (Luke xvi, 18.)

Now according to St. Mark (x, 9 sqq.) Christ says: “What therefore God hath joined together, let no man put asunder. . . . Whosoever

shall put away his wife and marry another, committeth adultery against her. And if the wife shall put away her husband, and be married to another, she committeth adultery."

Add to the above what St. Paul writes to the Corinthians and the Romans: "But to them that are married, not I but the Lord commandeth that the wife depart not from her husband. And if she depart, that she remain unmarried, or be reconciled to her husband. And let not the husband put away his wife." (I Cor. vii, 10-11.) And, "For the woman that hath an husband, whilst her husband liveth is bound to the law. But if her husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband. Therefore, whilst her husband liveth, she shall be called an adulteress, if she be with another man; but if her husband be dead she is delivered from the law of her husband, so that she is not an adulteress if she be with another man." (Rom. vii, 2-3.)

Nothing stronger nor plainer could be written to convince us of the absolute indissolubility of matrimony than what the two Evangelists Luke and Mark with St. Paul have here given us on the subject. They understood fully the meaning of the words of our Lord to the Pharisees: "What therefore God hath joined together, let no man put asunder." (Matt. xix, 6.)

A way is always found by those who are swayed

by an unholy passion to palliate their evil propensity. The craftiness of Satan, who perverted the words of God in His command to man in the garden of Paradise, thereby bringing untold misery upon him, comes to the help of those who seek to break the bond of matrimony, in aiding them to pervert God's own words, so as to make them conform to their unrighteous way of living. But those who obey the word of God in the Bible will follow its teachings: "What therefore God hath joined together, let no man put asunder." (Matt. xix, 6.)

CHAPTER XVIII

THE BIBLE AND PURGATORY

It is within the caliber of the most ordinary mind to discern a difference in the culpability of wrong-doing. There are crimes that call for severe punishment because of their heinousness, while others, of a less serious character, demand a more lenient treatment. The laws, which to be just should be founded on the divine law, are framed with a view of meting out to the transgressor a punishment commensurate with the misdemeanor committed, to insure the welfare of the community, and to uphold the majesty of the law.

No one will hold that to take the life of a fellow-man is no more reprehensible than to rob a person of his watch. What set of jurymen could be found that would entertain for a moment the thought of imposing a sentence of lifetime imprisonment on a person accused and convicted of poaching, as they might possibly do if he were found guilty of repeated acts of serious arson. It takes no great amount of wisdom, however, to understand that all infringements of the law are blameworthy and therefore punishable to the ex-

tent of their malice. Hence God, who is eternal justice, deals out to every one according to his merits or demerits. To gain the kingdom of heaven, the object of our life, we must be free from all sin and from the punishment due to it, for: "There shall not enter into it anything defiled." (Apoc. xxi, 27.)

But who shall say that God will exclude from His kingdom, and that for ever, the soul that has departed this life with some minor imperfection, or that has not entirely satisfied His divine justice for former transgressions, just as He forbids His kingdom to those who enter eternity with mortal guilt upon them?

It is of faith that there is a place, which we call purgatory, where petty faults, or the temporal punishment due to sin, are expiated. On this subject the Council of Trent decrees: "If anyone saith that, after the grace of justification has been received, to every penitent sinner the guilt is remitted, and the debt of eternal punishment is blotted out in such wise that there remains not any debt of temporal punishment to be discharged either in this world or in the next in purgatory, before the entrance to the kingdom of heaven can be opened (to him); let him be anathema." (Sess. vi, Can. 30.)

Now the Scriptures teach us that we have a holy and salutary duty to pray for the dead. But

according to the Bible, there is no pardon for those unfortunate souls that are consigned to everlasting torture, and the blessed need not our prayers. Therefore there must be another place where go those souls that leave this life free, it is true, from the guilt of grievous sin, but have some lesser fault to atone for, or have not fully satisfied God's justice for past sins. This third place or expiatory abode of souls, is called purgatory. In dealing with this subject the Council of Trent says: "Whereas the Catholic Church, instructed by the Holy Ghost, has, from the sacred writings and the ancient tradition of the Fathers, taught in sacred councils, and very recently in this œcumenical Synod, that there is a purgatory, and that the souls there detained are helped by the suffrages of the faithful, but principally by the acceptable sacrifice of the altar; the holy synod enjoins on bishops that they diligently endeavor that the sound doctrine concerning purgatory, transmitted by the holy Fathers and sacred councils, be believed, maintained, taught and everywhere proclaimed by the faithful of Christ." (Sess. xxv.)

The Jews, who were the guardians of God's holy religion prior to the coming of the Messias, believed in purgatory and in the help that those detained therein receive through the prayers and offerings of the living. Their belief is plainly

set forth in the Bible. "And making a gathering, he sent twelve thousand drachmas of silver to Jerusalem for sacrifice to be offered for the sins of the dead, thinking well and religiously concerning the resurrection. For if he had not hoped that they that were slain should rise again, it would have seemed superfluous and vain to pray for the dead. And because he considered that they who had fallen asleep with godliness, had great grace laid up for them. It is therefore a holy and wholesome thought to pray for the dead, that they may be loosed from sins." (II Mach. xii, 43-46.)

Commentary on these words of the Bible is superfluous.

Nothing could be more explicitly defined to ground us in our belief in a place of expiation after death for souls that have not paid to the last farthing the debt they owed to the justice of God, or to convince us that the prayers of the faithful are a benefit to those suffering souls.

There was no reason for our Lord to go into details concerning a doctrine which was current among the Jews, practised by them and taught in their synagogues. In whatever light we may choose to receive the book of Machabees, whether as divinely inspired, in which sense it is held by the Catholic Church; or as a simple history of Jewish customs, it establishes the fact that the

Jews did believe in purgatory, and in the efficacy of prayer and sacrifice offered for the souls of the dead.

Onesiphorus, a great friend and benefactor of St. Paul, died and was prayed for by the Apostle: "The Lord grant unto him to find mercy of the Lord in that day." (II Tim. i, 18.)

We will now consider the words of our Divine Lord Himself, as reported by St. Matthew, which strongly emphasize the belief in purgatory.

"And whosoever shall speak a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but he that shall speak against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world nor in the world to come." (Matt. xii, 32.) Evidently Christ calls to the attention of the Jews, in these words, a teaching common among them, namely, that there are sins that are forgiven in the next world. And again: "Amen, I say to thee, thou shalt not go out from thence till thou repay the last farthing." (Matt. v, 26.)

Now it is of faith, and the Holy Scriptures expressly declare, that no sin is ever forgiven in hell, the everlasting abode of the wicked. As to the blessed in heaven, no further forgiveness is needed, for nothing defiled can enter there. "The world to come" spoken of by the Savior, as reported by the Evangelist, can be none other than purgatory.

"If any man's work burn," says St. Paul, "he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved, yet so as by fire." (I Cor. iii, 15.)

Commenting on these words of the Apostle, St. Ambrose writes: "He will be saved, the Apostle said, because his substance shall remain, while his bad doctrine shall perish. Therefore he said, 'yet so as by fire,' in order that his salvation be not understood to be without pain. He shows, that he shall be saved indeed, but that he shall undergo the pain of fire, and be thus purified; not like the unbelieving and wicked man, who shall be punished in everlasting fire." (Comm. in I Ep. ad Cor. T, ii, in App., p. 122.)

And in the writings of St. Augustine on the same topic we read that: "The prayers of the Church and of some good persons are heard in favor of those Christians who have departed this life not so bad as to be deemed unworthy of mercy, nor so good as to be entitled to immediate happiness. So also at the resurrection of the dead there will be found some to whom mercy will be imparted, having gone through those pains to which the spirits of the dead are liable. Otherwise it would not have been said of some with truth, that 'their sin shall not be forgiven, neither in this world, nor in the world to come' (Matt. xii, 32), unless some sins were remitted in the next world." (De Civitate Dei, c. xxiv, p. 642.)

The Fathers, councils and tradition testify to the truth of this belief, and the Bible clearly teaches that there is a purgatory and that the prayers of the living, and especially the holy sacrifice of the altar, avail its inmates. Some undergo the temporal punishment due to sin in this life, some after death, while others may have to endure it here and hereafter.

In this manner they are purified of their dross, are saved, "yet so as by fire," the cleansing fire of purgatory, and thereby come to the kingdom of heaven.

CHAPTER XIX

THE BIBLE AND THE BLESSED TRINITY

SOME balk at the doctrine of the Blessed Trinity, because it is a mystery; others consider it a stumbling block simply because they do not understand the teaching of the Church on this sublime dogma of the Catholic faith.

To refuse to believe in the Blessed Trinity on account of its being a mystery is tantamount to rejecting the greater part of Christianity, which abounds in mysteries. But why frown upon this pivotal mystery of holy religion, and not on all mysteries, since all claim our acceptance upon the same grounds.

Human reason, essentially finite, has its limits, and cannot hope to sound the depths of the wisdom or of the nature of the Infinite Being.

Mystery exists in God, because there is an infinite difference between the Creator and His creature.

God is as far above His creation as eternity is above time. Could we comprehend fully all things, we should be as knowing as God Himself, which, no one can fail to acknowledge, is nothing

short of folly. Turn whither you will and mystery is certain to meet you: There are mysteries in the heavens, on earth, in the air, athwart the pathway of man, in a word we are deluged by mysteries. And why not then in Him who is the Creator and Lord of all? The denial of mystery is tantamount to a denial of one's own existence. But what is the Blessed Trinity? What is the teaching of the Church on this ineffable mystery?

The doctrine of the Church is that the divine nature is one in substance, yet has three distinct Persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost: "There are three who give testimony in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost. And these three are one." (I John v, 7.)

The Apostle leaves us not in doubt, but states clearly that there is only one divine nature, one substance, one God; yet in this one substance there are three distinct Persons, so that the Father differs from the Son and the Holy Ghost, and the Holy Ghost from the Father and the Son.

In the symbol called Athanasian, which the Church has inserted in her liturgy, we are taught that: "The Catholic faith is this, that we worship one God in Trinity, and Trinity in Unity, neither confounding the persons, nor dividing the substance. For there is one person of the Father, another of the Son, another of the Holy Ghost.

But the Godhead of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, is all one, the glory equal, the majesty co-eternal. . . . The Father is made of none, neither created nor begotten. The Son is of the Father alone, not made, not created, but begotten. The Holy Ghost is of the Father and the Son, not made, nor created, nor begotten, but proceeding. And in this Trinity there is nothing before or after, nothing greater or less, but the whole three persons are co-eternal together and co-equal."

And the fourth Council of the Lateran expresses itself in the following words: "We believe firmly, and sincerely confess, that there is only one God, eternal, immense, almighty, unchangeable, incomprehensible, and ineffable, Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Three persons indeed, but one absolutely simple essence, substance or nature." Unity of nature, trinity of persons, is the teaching of the Church. In this there can be no contradiction, since the Church makes a distinction between the nature and the personality of the Godhead. There is but one God, one nature only, yet a triple personality. The Father is first and is without principle; He Himself is the principle, neither created nor begotten, of the two other persons. The Son is the second person; He proceeds from the Father only and is begotten. The Holy Ghost is the third person;

He proceeds from the Father and the Son, not as two distinct principles, but as one principle, not begotten, but proceeding.

This is a brief exposé of what the Church teaches, and what we firmly believe, concerning the mystery of the Blessed Trinity.

KNOWLEDGE OF THE BLESSED TRINITY BEFORE THE COMING OF JESUS CHRIST

The explicit teaching of the New Testament, that we shall presently place in evidence, throws abundant light on many passages of the Old Testament, in which the belief in the mystery of the Blessed Trinity is substantially intimated.

It is not improbable that God, from the beginning, revealed to man a knowledge of the Trinity.

He created man that he might know Him, love Him, and serve Him in this world and be happy with Him forever in the next. It would therefore appear reasonable, that man, in keeping with his perfection, should have some knowledge of the Triune God.

True it may not have been as complete as Christianity has imparted it.

When the human race had spread over the world, a remembrance of this great mystery, however imperfect, seemed to linger with men. Moreover, after the dispersion of the Jews, to

whose keeping the revelations of God had been committed, they carried among the nations with whom they mingled the knowledge they had retained of the Blessed Trinity.

KNOWLEDGE OF THE BLESSED TRINITY IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

In the very first chapter of Genesis we are told that God, after He had brought into existence all the other orders of His creation, said: "Let us make man to our image and likeness." (Gen. i, 26.) "Let us make" suggests more than one divine person. It cannot mean the angels, since God did not stand in need of them for His work; nor did He associate them with Him in creating. "In our own image," expresses the unity of the Divine nature. To hold that, "Let us make" is used to express the plural of eminence is far from being correct, as there is no such figure of speech in the Hebrew language.

"Behold, Adam is become as one of us." (Gen. iii, 22.) "Come ye therefore, let us go down, and there confound their tongue." (Gen. xi, 7.)

"Whom shall I send, and who shall go for us." (Is. vi, 8.) These and a number of similar expressions, to be found in the Old Testament, are to be taken in the same sense as that of "Let us make man to our image and likeness." (Gen. i,

26.) "The Lord hath said to me, Thou art my son, this day have I begotten thee." (Ps. ii, 7.)

In explanation of these words of the Psalmist, "thou art my son," St. Paul tells us that they have reference to Christ the Son of God: "For to which of the Angels hath he said at any time, 'Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee?'" (Heb. i, 5.) "The Lord said to my Lord: sit thou at my right hand." (Ps. cix, 1.)

The Lord God Almighty said to Jesus Christ, on the day of His triumphant ascension into heaven, My Lord, sit Thou at My right hand, for it is Thy place.

"Holy, holy, holy the Lord God of hosts." (Is. vi, 3.) Words chanted by the Seraphim in the kingdom of heaven, magnifying the Blessed Trinity in the unity of substance. The ancient Jewish Rabbis commented on them: "Holy is the Father, holy is the Son, holy is the Holy Ghost."

TEACHING OF THE NEW TESTAMENT ON THE BLESSED TRINITY

The three first Evangelists in their narrative of the baptism of Jesus Christ, inform us that at the time He was baptized a voice was heard saying: "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." (Matt. iii, 17; Mark i, 11; Luke

iii, 22.) And at the same moment, the Spirit of God descended as a dove, and came upon him.

Christ Himself tells us that the Son and the Holy Ghost are distinct from one another and from the Father. "For God so loved the world, as to give his only begotten Son; that whosoever believeth in him, may not perish, but may have life everlasting." (John iii, 16.) This only begotten Son of God, who calls Himself also the Son of man, came down from heaven, and yet is never absent from it. "And no man hath ascended into heaven, but he that descended from heaven, the Son of man who is in heaven." (John iii, 13.) The only Son came out from the Father and descended to earth. "For the Father himself loveth you, because you have loved me, and have believed that I came out from God. I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world." (John xvi, 27-28.)

The Father from whom came the Son is not of a different nature than the Son. "I and the Father are one." (John x, 30.) For this reason the Father is in Him and He in the Father: "The Father is in me, and I in the Father." (John x, 38.)

Our Lord refers constantly to Himself as God equal to the Father, hence the Jews, who understood Him well, would stone Him as a blasphemer.

When Jesus was about to leave His Apostles, He spoke most feelingly to them, impressing upon them His own divinity, that of the Father and of the Holy Ghost. He reminded them that all three are but one in nature though distinct in person.

"Jesus saith to him: I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No man cometh to the Father, but by me. If you had known me, you would without doubt have known my Father also: and from henceforth you shall know him, and you have seen him. Philip saith to him: Lord, shew us the Father, and it is enough for us. Jesus saith to him: Have I been so long a time with you; and have you not known me? Philip, he that seeth me, seeth the Father also. How sayest thou, shew us the Father? Do you not believe, that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? The words that I speak to you, I speak not of myself. But the Father who abideth in me, he doth the works." (John xiv, 6-10.) Seeing that sadness hath entered into the hearts of His disciples, He wishes to encourage them, and in the same discourse tells them of the Holy Ghost, a divine person distinct from the Father and the Son. "And I will ask the Father, and he shall give you another Paraclete, that he may abide with you forever. The Spirit of truth whom the world cannot receive. . . . But the Paraclete, the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he

will teach you all things, and bring all things to your mind, whatsoever I shall have said to you.” (John xiv, 16, 17, 26.)

“But when the Paraclete cometh, whom I will send you from the Father, the Spirit of truth, who proceedeth from the Father, he shall give testimony of me.” (John xv, 26.)

“It is expedient to you that I go: for if I go not, the Paraclete will not come to you; but if I go, I will send him to you. But when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will teach you all truth. For he will not speak of himself; but what things soever he shall hear, he shall speak; and the things that are to come, he shall shew you. He shall glorify me; because he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it to you.” (John xvi, 7, 13, 14.)

Lest any doubt should arise in the minds of His Apostles in regard to what He said to them about the Holy Ghost proceeding from the Father, He adds: “All things whatsoever the Father hath, are mine. Therefore I said, that he shall receive of mine, and shew it to you.” (John xvi, 15.)

Who is so blind as not to be able to see in this discourse of our Lord to His Apostles the clearest possible teaching of three distinct divine persons having the same divine nature?

Before quitting the world, Christ commands His Apostles to go teach all nations, “baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son,

and of the Holy Ghost." (Matt. xxviii, 19.) All therefore who are baptized in Christ Jesus and profess His holy religion, necessarily make a public profession of their faith in the Blessed Trinity. The teaching of the Apostles is in perfect harmony with that of their Divine Master on this all-important dogma.

St. Paul writing to the Romans on the divinity of Christ says: "Christ, . . . who is over all things, God blessed for ever." (Rom. ix, 5.) With St. John he represents our Lord as the One by whom are made all things: "Who being the brightness of his glory, and the figure of the substance, and upholding all things by the word of his power." (Heb. i, 3.)

Writing to the Philippians, he recommends Christ to them as a model of humility: "Who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God. But emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in likeness of men, and in habit found as a man." (Phil. ii, 6-7.)

While God, and one with His Father, He lowers Himself to the condition of a servant in becoming man.

And now hear what St. John has to say about the Son of God made man. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in

the beginning with God. All things were made by him, and without him was made nothing that was made. In him was life, and the life was the light of men, and the light shineth in darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it. There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. This man came for a witness, to give testimony of the light, that all men might believe through him. He was not the light, but was to give testimony of the light. That was the true light, which enlighteneth every man that cometh into this world. He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, he gave power to be made the sons of God, to them that believe in his name. Who are born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us and we saw his glory, the glory as it were of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." (John i, 1-14.)

Could there be language more definite, more sublime on the divinity of Christ, the second person of the Blessed Trinity, true God and true man?

The Apostles speak of the Holy Ghost in like manner as a divine person distinct from the Father and the Son. "Now there are diversities

of graces, but the same spirit; And there are diversities of ministries, but the same Lord; And there are diversities of operations, but the same God, who worketh all in all. . . . But all these things one and the same spirit worketh, dividing to every one according as he will." (I Cor. xii, 4-6, 11.)

The Holy Ghost is here represented as a divine person distinct from the Father and the Son, the Giver of divine gifts.

He it was, the same divine person, the Holy Ghost, who came upon the Apostles on Pentecost Sunday. "And when the days of the Pentecost were accomplished, they were all together in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a mighty wind coming, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. And there appeared to them parted tongues as it were of fire, and it sat upon every one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they began to speak with divers tongues, according as the Holy Ghost gave them to speak." (Acts ii, 1-4.)

Further extracts from the Bible to unfold its divine teaching on the Blessed Trinity would be superfluous; for whoever has at heart the desire to know the truth concerning the doctrine of the Scriptures on the ineffable mystery of the Trinity cannot fail to find it in the exposition of the Scriptural texts we have here given.

CHAPTER XX

THE BIBLE AND INDULGENCES

CHRIST on Calvary is the way, the truth, and the life of the spiritual world, just as the sun in the heavens is the light, the heat, and the life of the material world. Blot out the sun from the heavens, and what have you? All is dark, dismal, barren, a veritable chaos.

Obliterate Christ on Calvary from Christianity, and what would be the sequel? Man would, ere long, be wrested once more from his exalted station and would miserably fall back into the dreary, darksome, debased life he led before the coming of Christ.

But with Christ on Calvary causing His saving atonement to move apace with the newborn generations of men and to continue its march down the ages for all time, we have every blessing that ever was, or ever will be bestowed on mankind. In its light the teachings of the Church are seen in their true sense, appearing what they in truth are, wholesome and lifegiving. All of them derive their meaning, their virtue, from the Cross and its Christ. They, one and all, partake of

Calvary's singular atonement. The light they shed, the grace they bestow, the life they give, are the salutary fruits of Christ on Calvary.

This is as true of indulgences as of the more profound dogmas of Christianity. For they, too, are watered by the blood shed on Calvary, and derive the graces and blessings they impart from its gracious atonement.

To discourse intelligently on any subject, a knowledge of it is essential. We are not competent to pass judgment on any matter about which we entertain erroneous notions, or against which our minds are set through the influence of gross misrepresentation concerning it. Every candid person will cheerfully welcome whatever may throw light on a topic under investigation, and will gladly embrace the truth when it is disclosed to him.

To arrive at an adequate understanding of our present theme, indulgences, we have first to ascertain whether or not a temporal punishment of some sort is demanded by Divine Justice, in order that satisfaction be made for sin, even after the guilt and eternal punishment have been remitted.

The Bible leaves not a shadow of doubt on this vital question. It teaches that God does exact a toll for sin, and that in the way of temporal punishment.

Though God forgave Adam and Eve their sin, after they confessed it, He nevertheless imposed a severe penalty upon them. "Cursed," said He, "is the earth in thy work; with labor and toil, shalt thou eat thereof all the days of thy life. Thorns and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herbs of the earth. In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread till thou return to the earth, out of which thou wast taken. . . . And the Lord God sent him out of the paradise of pleasure, to till the earth from which he was taken. And he cast out Adam." (Gen. iii, 17, 18, 19, 23, 24.)

Writing on this very subject of the temporal punishment God visited upon our proto-parents, St. Paul says: "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into this world, and by sin death; so death passed upon all men, in whom all have sinned." (Rom. v, 12.)

Because Moses and Aaron distrusted the word of God, "at the waters of contradiction," He said to them: "Because you have not believed me, to sanctify me before the children of Israel, you shall not bring these people into the land which I will give them." (Num. xx, 12.)

And He commanded Moses to "Go unto Mount Nebo, which is in the land of Moab, over against Jericho: and see the land of Chanaan, which I shall deliver to the children of Israel to possess,

and die thou in the mountain. When thou art gone up into it, thou shalt be gathered to thy people, as Aaron, thy brother, died in Mount Hor, and was gathered to his people. Because you trespassed against me in the midst of the children of Israel, at the waters of contradiction, in Cades, of the Desert of Sin: and you did not sanctify me among the children of Israel. Thou shalt see the land before thee, which I will give to the children of Israel, but thou shalt not enter into it." (Deut. xxxii, 49-52.)

David had grievously offended the Almighty, but repenting of his sin he confessed to God: "I have sinned exceedingly in doing this: I beseech thee take away the iniquity of thy servant, for I have done foolishly." (I Paral. xxi, 8.)

God forgave His servant David, but sent Gad, the seer of David, to tell him that he must make satisfaction for his sin, though it be forgiven him, and that he might choose one from among three chastisements, which the Lord God named.

"And David said to Gad: I am on every side in a great strait: but it is better for me to fall into the hands of the Lord, for his mercies are many, than into the hands of men. So the Lord sent a pestilence upon Israel, and there fell of Israel seventy thousand men." (I Paral. xxi, 13-14.)

On another occasion David had fallen into wicked ways, displeasing God exceedingly, and

he said to Nathan: "I have sinned against the Lord, and Nathan said to David: The Lord also hath taken away thy sin: thou shalt not die. Nevertheless, because thou hast given occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme, for this thing, the child that is born to thee, shall surely die." (II Kings xii, 13-14.)

Though God had forgiven the sin of David, His divine justice exacted that He impose a condign temporal punishment on him and He told him that "the child that is born to thee shall surely die."

In the Book of Jonas, we read that God sent Jonas to preach to the people of Ninive, and warn them of the impending destruction of their city. Upon their fasting and repentance, God recalled the sentence by which they were to be destroyed.

Other instances of temporal punishment for sin are recorded in the third book of Kings, chapter xxi, and in a number of other places in the Bible.

Sin is twofold, original and actual. Original sin, in which we are born, descends to us from our first parents.

Baptism cleanses us from original sin and all other defilements committed before baptism. The temporal punishment due to sin, by the grace of the sacrament, is also remitted.

Actual sin, which, according to its malice, may be either venial or mortal, is a transgression of

the law of God, by which we render ourselves guilty after baptism.

Mortal sin deserves eternal punishment, for it is of faith that a person dying in the state of grievous sin is cast into exterior darkness and consigned to everlasting tortures. This dogma of our holy religion is frequently and strikingly brought to our attention in the Bible. But God in His infinite mercy has condescended to afford mankind a way out of the meshes of sin and its consequences.

A true repentance, joined with the grace of the sacrament of penance, or a contrition truly sincere, founded on the love of God, with a desire to receive the sacrament, if in our power, will remit sin.

But when the transgressor is converted, does penance, and receives the grace of justification in the sacrament, or by perfect contrition with the desire of confessing his faults; does he at the same time merit to escape the temporal punishment due to sin?

No, he does not, as is convincingly shown in the case of David. "The Lord hath taken away thy sin," said Nathan to him, "nevertheless, . . . the child that is born to thee, shall surely die." (II Kings xii, 13-14.)

"If anyone saith," declares the Council of Trent, "that God always remits the whole pun-

ishment, together with the guilt, and that the satisfaction of penitents is no other than the faith whereby they apprehend that Christ has satisfied for them; let him be anathema." (Sess. xiv, Can. 12.)

The eternal punishment is condoned with the remission of guilt, but there remains, ordinarily, a greater or lesser temporal punishment, according to the malice of the sin, and the dispositions of the sinner, which he must expiate here or hereafter.

As for venial sin, which is but a slight offense against the law of God, not atoned for in this life, it, too, will have to be satisfied for in the world to come, not by the pains of hell, but by those of purgatory; for many shall enter into eternal life, "yet so as by fire."

INDULGENCES

There is sin, sad to say, very much sin, in the world, but God in His great mercy offers forgiveness to those who repent.

He demands, however, the bitter passion and cruel death upon the Cross of His well beloved Son, as the price of that pardon. The Cross, with its Divine Victim, is the ocean of God's infinite goodness and mercy to mankind. To it must the sinner go for that forgiveness of sin which the world cannot give. To it also, must he have

recourse to obtain the remission of the punishment due to his sins. He who is in danger of being consumed by fire, yet turns away from the only help that can save him from such a fate, is looked upon as a madman. In what other light can we consider the person who spurns the means that an all merciful Redeemer holds out to him, to rescue him from the avenging fire of an outraged God, who exacts that the debt incurred by sin be paid by some temporal punishment, "to the last farthing."

That means God has placed in His Church, and has made it available to all the faithful, through the granting of indulgences.

An indulgence is the releasing of the temporal punishment, which often remains due to sin after its guilt has been remitted.

In the ninth book of the Codex Theodosianus (M. J. Bouvier, Treatise on Indulgences, p. 6) there is a chapter on the Indulgences of Crimes, or the releasing of the penalty due certain criminals, which he granted on special public festivals. The indulgence here spoken of is nothing else than a remission of some deserved punishment. In this sense the Church uses the term indulgence. The remission is therefore of the temporal punishment, for eternal punishment is not remitted by indulgences. Besides, it must be for actual sin, since baptism leaves nothing that needs expiation.

Then the sin must first be forgiven, as no temporal punishment is condoned whilst the guilt of sin remains.

The spiritual treasury of the Church is the great source of indulgences, for it is the super-abundance of the satisfaction of Jesus Christ and the Saints, which has not been applied, and which the Church has power to dispense to the repentant sinner.

THE CHURCH HAS THE POWER OF GRANTING INDULGENCES

The Bible teaches us that Jesus Christ gave this power of granting indulgences to His Church. To St. Peter He said: "And I will give to thee the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven. And whatsoever thou shalt bind upon earth, it shall be bound also in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, it shall be loosed also in heaven." (Matt. xvi, 19.)

Then did He say to all the Apostles, in speaking to them, on the authority of the Church: "Amen, I say to you, whatsoever you shall bind upon earth, shall be bound also in heaven; and whatsoever you shall loose on earth, it shall be loosed also in heaven." (Matt. xviii, 18.)

The Church therefore has the power to open heaven, and to sweep aside every obstacle that could stand in the way of entering it. Our Lord,

in granting this power, does so in broad, general terms, thereby excluding the possibility of any exception thereto. But temporal punishment is a spiritual hindrance to the Kingdom of God, and must be satisfied for, ere we can hope to enjoy its beatific vision.

St. Paul makes use of the prerogative of the Church in granting an indulgence to one of the faithful at Corinth. That Christian had taken his father's wife, and St. Paul exercised the power of binding, by inflicting a penance, and by excluding him from the assemblies of the faithful till he had performed it. The Corinthian submitted with sincere and fervent repentance; and the following year St. Paul exercised also the power of loosing by remitting the remainder of the penance, "lest perhaps such a one be swallowed up with overmuch sorrow. And to whom you have pardoned anything, I also, for, what I have pardoned, if I have pardoned anything, for your sakes have I done it, in the person of Christ." (II Cor. ii, 7-10.)

The tradition of the Church, on the power of granting indulgences, is established from Apostolic days down, by the Council of Trent.

"Whereas the power of conferring indulgences was granted by Christ to the Church; and she has, even in the most ancient times, used the said power, delivered unto her of God: the sacred,

holy synod teaches, and enjoins, that the use of indulgences for the Christian people, most salutary and approved of by the authority of sacred councils, is to be retained in the Church; and it condemns with anathema those who either assert that they are useless; or who deny that there is in the Church the power of granting them.” (Sess. xxv.)

The granting of indulgences, or the remission of the temporal punishment due to sin, is therefore truly scriptural, and the Church adheres strictly to the teaching of the Bible in the exercise of her God-given right to dispense them to the faithful of Christ.

CHAPTER XXI

THE BIBLE AND INFALLIBILITY

INFALLIBILITY is a prerogative essential to the very nature of the Church of Jesus Christ. The Holy Scriptures teach in clear, unmistakable terms that this attribute is inherent in her. Deprived of it, she would be like all human institutions, liable to err.

When controversies arise, contentions spring up, or difficulties disturb the peace among the faithful, who is to determine the merits of these causes of trouble and disunion but the Church of Christ that has the promise of her Divine Founder, that He would "be with her all days to the consummation of the world," teaching her "all truth."

Some might suggest, forsooth, the Scriptures. But the Bible is the very source of most of the controversies. Heresies, schisms, and false doctrines of every hue are the ungodly fruits of erroneous interpretations of the Bible. To the same source are traceable the contradictory opinions, impious teachings and extravagant contentions so numerous over the world in matters of religion. Some investigate passage after passage

of the Scriptures to find a defense for their manner of thinking, while others weigh in the balance of human judgment the same texts of the Bible only to arrive at altogether different views on the same subject.

Had Jesus Christ therefore not established a living authority, speaking, perpetual, infallible, helped and guided by the Holy Ghost, to teach infallibly in all matters in controversy, to determine unerringly what is truth, what error, to throw light on the true meaning of the Scriptures, to dispel all doubt or ambiguity, that we be not tossed to and fro by false opinions, there could be no true religion or Church of Christ.

Some would embrace a so-called religion at haphazard, others for selfish personal interests, others to be in the fashion or to follow a fad, some through caprice and others led by their passions, but all without any certitude as to what they do profess.

To obviate such deplorable conditions, to establish religion on a solid foundation, to make the Church unchangeable, to keep the deposit of faith in its purity and integrity to the end of the world, it becomes the wisdom of God to constitute an infallible teacher and judge for all time, in all matters pertaining to faith and morals.

Imagine, if you can, the disturbances, the dissensions, the broils and contentions that would

disturb nations if there were no judge among them, clothed with power to adjudicate all their differences. Or suppose there were only a number of laws and ordinances among them that they would observe at their pleasure, would not each individual, in case of dispute, construe the law in his own favor to uphold his best interests? The more powerful would oppress the weaker, injustice and violence would prevail over justice and equity, a chaos of conflicting contentions would cover the whole face of the earth.

In like manner, if God did not place over His Church a Teacher and Judge to decide unerringly all questions of faith and morals, the Christian religion would present nothing short of a conglomeration of capricious opinions, of opposite contradictory holdings and contentions without number, as was witnessed at the time of the so-called reformation, when the innovators refused to heed the decisions of the tribunal instituted by Christ.

On the other hand, had He simply given us a code of laws and revealed to us the sublime mysteries of the New Testament, without safeguarding them in the appointment of an authority that would determine infallibly the meaning of the laws and likewise explain the mysteries of His religion, each one would interpret the laws and comment on the mysteries according to his own

way of thinking, or follow the teaching of the sect with which, for personal reasons, he chose to ally himself. Heretics have ever followed this method.

Had He founded His Church on such a basis, Christ would have subjected His gospel to all sorts of caprice and all manner of surpassingly strange investigations of the human mind, but especially to all the passions of mankind.

Furthermore, a great number of Bibles have been mutilated and falsified in many places and it requires an infallible teacher, guided by the Holy Ghost, to pass upon all those different creeds that originate from such wanton abuse of the Bible. Without such a judge and teacher there would be a Babel of conflicting doctrines, a labyrinth of errors.

Christ would have built His Church on the moving sands, and not on the immovable rock. "The gates of hell would prevail against" His most solemn promise, "to teach her all truth" or to be with her "all days to the consummation of the world." She would not be the "pillar and ground of truth." His prayer for her, that she fail not, would be worthless.

Before giving the proof, and that from the Bible, of the infallibility of the Church of Christ, let me drive home to the minds of unbiased and thinking men the necessity of the inerrancy of

the Church, from the conditions governing our civil life.

In each state of the Union, besides the ordinary courts, before whose tribunal differences between citizens are adjudicated, there is a court of last resort, the court of appeals, whose decision is final. It happens at times that the litigants are able to carry their cause into the federal courts of the land where the Supreme Court of the country in its verdict is absolutely final. All these tribunals of justice are intended to mete out justice to every citizen, irrespective of rank or condition, who may have, or at least thinks he has, a cause of grievance against his fellow man. When the court of last resort, whether state or national, has rendered its judgment on the merits of the case, the parties concerned must abide by it.

Man in his wisdom establishes his courts of law to uphold good government, to insure to every citizen his just rights and to maintain good order and peace.

If in the judgment of men and nations such tribunals are indispensable to safeguard the interests of the citizen, community, state and country, can we entertain for a single moment the thought, that God, Infinite Wisdom that He is, would leave the kingdom He founded on earth for the eternal welfare of man without such an institution to pass upon the rightful construction

of the laws governing it, and to adjudicate the differences that might possibly arise among its members, concerning its claims over them?

That would be to subject the Creator to His creature, in as much as He would show less wisdom in the affairs of His kingdom on earth than man in the government of his concerns. Such an assertion would be nothing short of the most shameful blasphemy. Nor can any person, however low in the ranks of humanity, entertain, in good faith, any like opinion of his God.

But our civil tribunals, state and national, may and do reverse themselves on the same proposition, therefore they can, and by their reversing themselves they acknowledge that they do, err.

To elucidate, we will select but one instance among many wherein the Supreme Bench of the nation reversed its finding in one night. The question of an income tax had for a long time occupied the minds of our legislators. It finally passed both houses, Congress and the Senate of the United States, and became a law of the land. The constitutionality of this law was called into question and was tried out before the Supreme Court of the country. After a due investigation of the merits of the law, the court decided that it was constitutional. The very next day, however, this same tribunal reversed its finding of the day previous, holding that the income tax law was

contrary to the Constitution, and could not be enforced against the people of the United States.

Here we have the highest judicial body in the land, and one that is held the world over as one of the most brilliant, learned tribunals of justice extant. Yet it is acknowledged, and its own decisions corroborate it, that it is liable to make mistakes and err in its judgments. This, after all, is not so passing strange, since the judges are human and apt to render opinions not always in keeping with justice and truth. To admit such a condition in the government founded by Jesus Christ, in His kingdom among men, would be to place it on a level with all human institutions, subject to error.

It would be to deny the divine origin of the Church, which is "the pillar and ground of truth," and to render our faith, "once delivered to the saints," like "the reed shaken by the wind," unstable, unsafe, nay, deceptive and subversive of Christianity itself, an absolute denial of divine revelation, of divine teaching.

But our faith, founded on the word of God, who can neither deceive nor be deceived, must be such, that we "Be not carried away with various and strange doctrines." (Heb. xiii, 9.)

"Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing, and that there be no schisms among

you, but that you be perfect in the same mind, and in the same judgment." (I Cor. i, 10.) Only in this manner can the Church of Christ be one in all things, as our Lord earnestly prayed.

"Holy Father, keep them in thy name, whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we also are . . . that they also may be one in us, that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou hast given me, I have given to them; that they may be one, as we also are one, I in them and thou in me; that they may be made perfect in one, and the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast also loved me." (John xvii, 11, 21, 22, 23.)

This has been in fact, the history of the Church, from the day of her foundation, Christ abiding in her, "the same yesterday, to-day and forever." She is the only institution among men that has always been of one mind in all the years of her life, in her teachings, definitions and decisions, regarding the Gospel of Christ.

What she teaches to-day was taught by Christ and the Apostles in their day; what she holds now is the same unwavering doctrine she has stood by during her long career, and she stands alone, like the sun in a cloudless heaven, the only tribunal that has never in any jot or tittle reversed

itself in matters of faith and morals, in those teachings of Christ, deposited in her and transmitted without change or alteration from Apostolic days to our own. A glorious, a unique record indeed, but she is divine and has the promise of her Divine Founder "that he would be with her all days even to the consummation of the world." Her teaching is, and must be, infallible. It is the solemn declaration of the Bible.

Jesus Christ speaking of His Church avers: "And the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." (Matt. xvi, 18.) If the Church were not infallible but could fall into error, then truly would "the gates of hell prevail against it," and Christ would have prevaricated. Who will not exclaim with St. Peter: "Lord, to whom shall we go; thou hast the word of eternal life."

"And I will ask the Father, and he shall give you another Paraclete, that he may abide with you forever. The spirit of truth . . . shall abide with you, and shall be in you." (John xiv, 16-17.) A positive promise is here made by our Lord to His Church in the person of the Apostles that the spirit of truth, the Holy Ghost, will abide with her forever. How then can she err?

"As the Father hath sent me, I also send you." (John xx, 21.) And again: "All power is given to me in heaven and in earth. Going, there-

fore, teach ye all nations; . . . and behold I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world." (Matt. xxviii, 18-20.) Christ came on earth to teach the world the word of His Father, and all power was His to accomplish His mission, in heaven and on earth. As He was sent, He in turn sends His Apostles, promising them the Spirit of truth and that He Himself would never desert them, but would abide with them to the end of time.

His divine assistance guaranteed to His Church precludes all possibility of her ever teaching otherwise than unerringly God's holy word. "He that heareth you, heareth me; and he that despiseth you, despiseth me; and he that despiseth me, despiseth him that sent me." (Luke x, 16.) Christ leaves no opening for doubt in these words, but states positively that it is one and the same thing to hear His Church or to hear Him, to reject her teaching or to reject Him, for the teaching of His Church and His own is the same.

St. Paul in writing about the Church to Timothy assures him that it is "the pillar and ground of truth" (I Tim. iii, 15), and St. Augustine wrote that he would not believe the Gospel, if the authority of the Church did not oblige him to do so, thereby showing his belief in the infallibility of the Church. (Lib. Contra epist. Manich., c. 4.)

In his letter to the Hebrews the Apostle writes: "Jesus Christ, yesterday, and to-day, and the same forever." (Heb. xiii, 8.) Jesus Christ was yesterday, that is, that He is from all eternity; that He was in the prophets; "and to-day" in the Apostles and in His Church to guide and protect her; "and the same forever," with the Church on earth to teach her all truth, to make her infallible in her teaching, and with the Church in heaven to be her joy.

Let him who will not hear the Church, says Jesus Christ, "be to thee as the heathen and publican." (Matt. xviii, 17.) He gives an imperative command to abide in all things by the teaching of the Church, and that under the severe penalty of being classed with "the heathen and the publican." But if the Church were not infallible in her teaching, how could our Lord exact, in such drastic terms, that we accept her every teaching, and abide by it?

The Catholic Church holds the Pope to be infallible only in his official character as supreme teacher of the Universal Church, in matters of faith and morals. The Pontiff's infallibility is the privilege of the office, not the attribute of the man, and is official not personal. It is solely by virtue of the supernatural assistance of the Holy Ghost, promised to him in his office of teacher, who, as the Spirit of Truth, leads him into all

truth. The Pope therefore speaks *ex cathedra*, or infallibly, when he speaks as universal teacher, in the name and with the authority of the Apostles; on a point of faith or morals and with the purpose of binding every member of the Church to accept and believe his decision. The Scriptural proof of papal infallibility is strong and convincing.

"And I say to thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." (Matt. xvi, 18.) "And I shall give to thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven." (Matt. xvi, 19.)

Both these texts amply show that neither the Church of Christ, nor the foundation on which He built it, could ever fail. Hence the utterance of our Lord would be an empty saying and most unworthy of Him if the Church governed by Peter, or he in ruling over it, could err.

"Simon, Simon, behold Satan hath desired to have you, that he might sift you as wheat." (Luke xxii, 31.) "But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not, and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren." (Luke xxii, 32.)

Christ prayed especially for Peter that his faith should not fail, and, strong in it, he would be able to encourage and strengthen his brethren in the faith, so that they would not fall into error.

In the fifteenth chapter of the Acts of the Apostles we find that St. Peter claimed the special right of passing upon the questions that came up for adjudication before the Council of Jerusalem: "And when there had been much disputing, Peter, rising up, said to them: Men, brethren, you know that in former days God made choice among us, that by my mouth the Gentiles should hear the word of the Gospel and believe." Then St. James, after Peter had spoken, and rendered his decision, united with the others present and conformed to what St. Peter declared, in these words: "For it hath seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us." (Acts xv, 7, 8, 28.)

Thus they recognized St. Peter as the supreme Doctor of the whole Church, supernaturally assisted by the Holy Ghost to teach, define, and declare the truth deposited with the Church.

Pius X claims to be, by divine right, the successor of St. Peter and Christ's Vicar on earth. Since our Lord, to whom is given by His Father all power in heaven and on earth, appointed St. Peter and his rightful successors in the see of Rome to the end of time supreme teacher of the Universal Church, the Universal Church is commanded by Jesus Christ Himself to submit to and accept humbly what the Pope teaches in matters of faith and morals. To claim that the Pope can err in what he thus teaches is tantamount to

holding that the whole Church, by divine authority, could be brought to believe in error. This is a bold declaration that God could lend Himself to falsehood, which is blasphemous in the extreme.

CHAPTER XXII

THE BIBLE AND JUSTIFICATION

WERE we not confronted with the accumulative testimony of both sacred and profane history, in all ages, of the strange vagaries and incomprehensible aberrations of the human mind in religious matters, we should stand aghast at the irrational and unscriptural doctrine of justification by faith alone.

This faith is not a faith in all that God has revealed, but a personal faith, by which the person justified believes that the saving merits of Jesus Christ are applied to him personally, and that even though he persevere in iniquity his salvation is assured. The most perfunctory reading of the Bible would show this teaching to be at variance with all its divine utterances.

It is possible only to a mind clouded by its surroundings or darkened by a refusal to accept and coöperate with the grace of God, when He graciously vouchsafes to grant it.

But give your attention to the pleadings of the Scripture on the subject. “And if I should have

the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge; and if I should have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing." (I Cor. xiii, 2.) "And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity." (I Cor. xiii, 13.) "Wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?" (Jas. ii, 20.) "Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son on the altar?" (Jas. ii, 21.) "Seest thou that faith did coöperate with his works, and by works faith was made perfect?" (Jas. ii, 22.) "Ye see then how by works a man is justified, and not by faith only." (Jas. ii, 24.) "For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead." (Jas. ii, 26.)

We are told by St. Augustine, that St. James, who was the first Bishop of Jerusalem, wrote his epistle to correct certain erroneous opinions that were being circulated in regard to certain passages of the epistles of St. Paul. (*De Fide et Operibus*, c. 14.)

If the Holy Scriptures intimate that a person may be justified by the practice of some particular virtue, they by no means exclude the necessity of exercising the other virtues, but rather presuppose them. They simply aver that the virtue mentioned as justifying is the chief virtue, at

the time, by the exercise of which salvation may be gained.

Our Lord's sermon on the mount serves admirably as an illustration of our contention.

"Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are the meek: for they shall possess the land.

Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.

Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after justice: for they shall have their fill.

Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.

Blessed are the clean of heart: for they shall see God.

Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.

Blessed are they that suffer persecution for justice sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."

(Matt. v, 3-11.)

"And every one that hath this hope in him, sanctifieth himself, as he also is holy." (I John iii, 3.)

"For all the law is fulfilled in one word: thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." (Gal. v, 14.)

To hold, therefore, that any one of the virtues mentioned, to the exclusion of all the other virtues, justifies us, is a perversion of the Bible, a

falsification of the word of God. In like manner, when faith is spoken of as a means of justification, it is false to teach that by faith only, to the rejection of all other virtues, we can obtain justification.

But we are told that faith alone does justify and is so spoken of by St. Paul: "By grace are ye saved through faith: and that not of yourselves, for it is the gift of God." (Eph. ii, 8.) And: "Not of works lest any man should boast." (Eph. ii, 9.)

Now faith is twofold: objective and subjective. Subjective faith exists in the soul of the one who believes, and it enables him to hold fast to all that God has been pleased to reveal to man. Objective faith is the foundation of the other virtues, and when coupled with charity, renders our works worthy of a supernatural reward, whilst our good works, devoid of faith, can claim only a natural reward. In keeping with this, St. Paul in the passages taken from his letter to the Ephesians refers to faith in connection with charity, as he explicitly says in his Epistle to the Corinthians. "If I should have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I should have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing." (I Cor. xiii, 2.)

We are further told that the Apostle claims that "faith alone justifies" in these words: "We conclude that a man is justified by faith, without the deeds of the law." (Rom. iii, 28.) The Apostle makes no reference in this passage to good works, but speaks of the faith of Christ in contradistinction to the ceremonial laws of the Jews, which he declares in this same epistle to the Romans: "For sin shall not have dominion over you; for you are not under the law, but under grace. What then? Shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid." (Rom. vi, 14-15.) And "For the law was given by Moses; grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." (John i, 17.)

Christ Himself assures us that faith without works will not save us: "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father, who is in heaven. . . . Many will say to me in that day: Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name, and cast out devils in thy name, and done many miracles in thy name? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, you that work iniquity. Every one therefore that heareth these my words, and doth them, shall be likened to a wise man that built his house upon a rock. . . . And every one that heareth these my words, and

doth them not, shall be like a foolish man, that built his house upon the sand." (Matt. vii, 21-26.)

But what shall we do to be justified? to be saved? What does the Bible command in order that we may obtain our justification? Give ear to its solemn warnings. "The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence and the violent bear it away." (Matt. xi, 12.) "Strive to enter by the narrow gate." (Luke xiii, 24.) "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me." (Luke ix, 23.) "For he that will save his life, shall lose it." (Matt. xvi, 25.) That is, we must not spare our soul, but practise mortification, obedience, humility and all other virtues. We must not stand still, but we must advance, go forward in the exercise of virtue and good works. "So run that you may obtain. And every one that striveth for the mastery, refraineth himself from all things: and they indeed that they may receive a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible one. I therefore so run, not as at an uncertainty: I so fight, not as one beating the air: but I chastise my body, and bring it into subjection; lest perhaps, when I have preached to others, I myself should become a castaway." (I Cor. ix, 24-27.)

We should not go backward; "no man putting

his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the Kingdom of God." (Luke ix, 62.) "With fear and trembling work out your salvation." (Phil. ii, 12.) "Not as though I had already attained, or were already perfect: but I follow after, if I may by any means apprehend, wherein I am also apprehended by Christ Jesus. Brethren, I do not count myself to have apprehended. But one thing I do: forgetting the things that are behind, and stretching forth myself to those that are before, I press toward the mark, to the prize of the supernal vocation of God in Christ Jesus." (Phil. iii, 12-16.) "Through many tribulations we must enter into the kingdom of God." (Acts xiv, 21.)

Christ answered the young man who asked Him: "Good Master, what good shall I do that I may have life everlasting?" "If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments." (Matt. xix, 16, 17.)

To gain heaven we say with St. Paul that we must be nailed to the Cross with Christ; and live, not we, but Christ in us. (Gal. ii, 19-20.) "They who are Christ's have crucified their flesh, with the vices and concupiscences." (Gal. v, 24.) And we must suffer with Christ, if we would reign with him. (II Tim. ii, 11-12.)

How did the Apostles and the Martyrs live to gain eternal life? "They were stoned, they were

cut asunder, they were tempted, they were put to death by the sword, they wandered about in sheepskins, in goatskins, being in want, distressed, afflicted." (Heb. xi, 37.) Let the holy religious and anchorites tell us how they obtained justification.

"Of whom the world was not worthy," says the Apostle, they were, "wandering in deserts, in mountains, and in dens, and in caves of the earth." (Heb. xi, 38.) What did the great St. Paul do to be justified? "I chastise my body," he says, "and bring it into subjection." (I Cor. ix, 27.) "For I reckon that the sufferings of this time are not worthy to be compared with the glory to come, that shall be revealed in us." (Rom. viii, 18.)

Hence it was that he did not cease to combat to the end, and to gain the crown that no man could take from him, the crown of eternal glory, the reward for persevering in his justification, which he did by being "in prisons more frequently, in stripes above measure, in deaths often. Of the Jews five times," as he continues, "did I receive forty stripes, save one. Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice was I shipwrecked, a night and a day I was in the depth of the sea. In journeying often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils from my own nation, in perils from the Gentiles, in perils in the city, in perils in

the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils from false brethren. In labor and painfulness, in much watchings, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness. Besides those things which are without my daily instance, the solicitude for all the church." (II Cor. xi, 23-28.)

Right well did he labor, suffer, endure hardships, and bear up bravely against hunger and thirst, not to become a castaway, but to merit, by his good works and firm faith, eternal life. The grace of God which we obtain through Jesus Christ, works in us, draws us from sin, and insures to us our justification.

For this reason St. Paul pleads with us, that we give thanks to God, without ceasing, for the great blessing of justification. "Giving thanks to God the Father, who hath made us worthy to be partakers of the lot of the saints in light: Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of the Son of his love. In whom we have redemption, through his blood, the remission of sins." (Col. i, 12-14.) In its explanation of the words of the Apostle, the Council of Trent tells us in what the justification of the impious consists.

"By which words a description of the justification of the impious is indicated—as being a translation from that state wherein man is born a

child of the first Adam, to the state of grace and of the adoption of the sons of God, through the second Adam, Jesus Christ, our Savior. And this translation, since the promulgation of the gospel, cannot be effected without the laver of regeneration, or the desire thereof, as it is written; unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of heaven." (Sess. vi, c. 4.)

The holy synod declares that the justification of adults is the work of the grace of God, but the free coöperation on the part of man is required to render this grace efficacious.

It is in the power of man to neglect the grace of God and in so doing fail to be justified, but if he coöperates with it, he will be made a child of God, a living member of the body of Jesus Christ.

"The synod furthermore declares that in adults the beginning of the said justification is to be derived from the preventient grace of God, through Jesus Christ, that is to say, from His vocation, whereby, without any merits existing on their parts, they are called; that so they who by sins were alienated from God, may be disposed through His quickening and assisting grace to convert themselves to their own justification, by freely assenting to and coöoperating with that said grace: in such sort that, while God touches the heart of man by the illumination of the Holy

Ghost, man is not himself utterly without doing anything, while he receives that inspiration, for as much as he is also able to reject it; yet is he not able, by his own free will, without the grace of God, to move himself unto justice in His sight; Hence, when it is said in the Sacred Writings: 'Turn ye to me, and I will turn to you' (Zach. i, 3), we are admonished of our liberty; and when we answer: 'Convert us, O Lord, to thee, and we shall be converted' (Sam. v, 21), we confess that we are prevented by the grace of God." (Sess. vi, c. 5.)

In the seventh chapter the holy council, after giving an exposé of how man by the prevenient grace of God through Jesus Christ, prepares himself for justification, tells us what the justification of the impious is, and what it causes: "This disposition or preparation is followed by justification itself, which is not remission of sins merely, but also the sanctification and renewal of the inward man, through the voluntary reception of the grace and of the gifts whereby man of unjust becomes just, and of an enemy a friend, that so he may be an heir according to hope of life everlasting.

"Of this justification, the causes are these: the final cause indeed is the glory of God and of Jesus Christ, and life everlasting; while the efficient cause is a merciful God, who washes and sancti-

fies gratuitously, signing and anointing with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is the pledge of our inheritance; but the meritorious cause is His most beloved only-begotten, our Lord Jesus Christ, who, when we were enemies, for the exceeding charity wherewith He loved us, merited justification for us by His most holy Passion on the wood of the cross, and made satisfaction for us unto God the Father; the instrumental cause is the sacrament of baptism, which is the sacrament of faith, without which (faith) no man was ever justified; lastly, the formal cause is the justice of God, not that whereby He Himself is just, but that whereby He maketh us just, that is to say, with which we being endowed by Him, are renewed in the spirit of our mind, and we are not only reputed, but are truly called, and are, just, receiving justice within us, each one according to his own measure, which the Holy Ghost distributes to every one as He wills, and according to each one's proper disposition and coöperation. For, although no one can be just but he to whom the merits of the Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ are communicated, yet is this done in the said justification of the impious, when by the merit of that same most holy Passion, the charity of God is poured forth by the Holy Spirit in the hearts of those that are justified, and is inherent therein: whence, man, through Jesus

Christ, in whom he is ingrafted, receives, in the said justification, together with the remission of sins, all these (gifts) infused at once, faith, hope, and charity. For faith, unless hope and charity be added thereto, neither unites man perfectly with Christ, nor makes him a living member of His body. For which reason it is most truly said that faith without works is dead and profitless; and in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availleth anything, nor uncircumcision, but faith, which worketh by charity. (Jas. ii, 20.)

"This faith catechumens beg of the Church, agreeably to a tradition of the Apostles, previously to the sacrament of baptism, when they beg for the faith which bestows life everlasting, which, without hope and charity, faith cannot bestow; whence also do they immediately hear that word of Christ: 'If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments.' Wherefore, when receiving true and Christian justice, they are bidden immediately on being born again, to preserve it pure and spotless, as the first robe given them through Jesus Christ, in lieu of that which Adam by his disobedience lost for himself and for us, that so they may bear it before the judgment seat of our Lord Jesus Christ, and may have life everlasting." (Sess. vi, c. 7.)

Justification is therefore the fruit of the prevenient grace of God gratuitously bestowed on us

by Him, and is granted through Jesus Christ, the Savior of men.

Hence the holy Synod says: "If any one saith that man may be justified before God by his own works, whether done through the teaching of human nature, or that of the law, without the grace of God through Jesus Christ, let him be anathema." (Sess. vi, Can. 1.)

For justification not only cleanses man from his sins, but raises him to a supernatural state, a gift which nature of itself could not bestow.

The Council, having condemned those who deny the need of the grace of God for their justification, proceeds against those who teach that no coöperation, on the part of man, with God's grace, is required to be justified.

"If any man saith that man's free will, moved and excited by God, by assenting to God exciting and calling, nowise coöperates towards disposing and preparing itself for obtaining the grace of justification; that it cannot refuse its consent, if it would, but that, as something inanimate, it does nothing whatever, and is merely passive, let him be anathema." (Sess. vi, Can. 4.)

And on the nature itself of justification the Council avers: "If any one saith that men are justified, either by the sole imputation of the justice of Christ, or by the sole remission of sins, to the exclusion of the grace and the charity

which is poured forth in their hearts by the Holy Ghost and is inherent in them, or even that the grace whereby we are justified is only the favor of God, let him be anathema." (Sess. vi, Can. 11.)

Once obtained, justification does not block man's progress in the love of God: contrariwise, it opens up to him an avenue to increase daily in the knowledge of God. On the other hand, if he proves himself faithless to the grace of God and relapses into his former evil ways, he places his justification in jeopardy. Those, however, who are not of the household of the faith, maintain that we cannot increase in holiness of life, nor can part with it once we have obtained it.

But these pernicious views fall also under the ban of the same holy synod, and are condemned by it. "If any one saith that a man once justified can sin no more, nor lose grace, and that therefore he that falls and sins was never truly justified; or, on the other hand, that he is able during his whole life, to avoid all sins, even those that are venial, except by a special privilege from God, as the Church holds in regard of the Blessed Virgin, let him be anathema." (Sess. vi, Can. 23.) And, "If any one saith that the justice received is not preserved and also increased before God through good works; but that the said works are

merely the fruits and signs of justification obtained, but not a cause of the increase thereof, let him be anathema." (Sess. vi, Can. 24.) "And every man," says the Apostle St. Paul, "shall receive his own reward, according to his own labor." (I Cor. iii, 8.)

And "always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord." (I Cor. xv, 58.)

"For God is not unjust, that He should forget your work, and the love which you have shewn in His name." (Heb. vi, 10.)

Therefore the Council of Trent decrees on the increase of justification received: "Having, therefore, been thus justified and made the friends and domestics of God, advancing from virtue to virtue, they are renewed, as the Apostle says, day by day; that is, by mortifying the members of their own flesh, and by presenting them as instruments of justice into sanctification, they, through the observance of the commandments of God and of the Church, faith coöperating with good works, increase in that justice which they have received through the grace of Christ, and are still further justified, as it is written: 'He that is just, let him be justified still,' and again, 'Be not afraid to be justified even unto death'; and also, 'Do you see that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only.' And this increase of justification,

Holy Church begs, when she prays: ‘Give unto us, O Lord, increase of faith, hope and charity.’” (Sess. vi, c. 10.)

Now life everlasting is a very great favor, but it is also a glorious reward. It is a grace, since God has been pleased to grant it to us through the special merits of Jesus Christ, and a reward, because according to His promise we merit it by our good works, if we continue in them to the close of our sojourn on earth, for our Divine Redeemer gives us warning that only “he that shall persevere unto the end shall be saved.” (Matt. x, 22.)

For in that day, which fast approacheth (“Behold, I come quickly”), Jesus Christ, the judge of the living and the dead, will remunerate us according to the merits of our deeds; “And my reward is with me, to render to every man, according to his works.” (Apocal. xxii, 12.) Let us not, therefore, deceive ourselves by vain boasting, but let us hear the word of God, and keep it.

It has not been without a purpose that I have quoted so extensively from the Scriptures and the Council of Trent on this vital subject of justification. I desired the Bible to speak for itself and, from its own pages, confound those who are so clamorous for the Bible. Hence, if they be not like those “who have eyes to see, and see not,” they cannot fail to descry the doctrine of the Church

on justification, on almost every page of the Bible.

I have taken freely from the holy Council of Trent, in order to put in evidence that the teaching of the Church is one with that of the Bible, and that it has been uniform from the days of Christ and His Apostles to the present day.

Man since the fall of Adam is more prone to evil than to good. Hence the soothing doctrine of justification without good works offers him a facile outlet to indulge in his evil inclinations and still look, albeit vainly, forward to a glorious resurrection.

The spirit of darkness, "that goeth about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour," is no less a deceiver to-day than he was when he tempted Adam and Eve in the garden of Paradise, and by deception caused them to fall from grace into sin, thereby to be driven forth from that garden of delights.

Justification without good works is a deceit of Lucifer, to draw men away from the love and service of God.

We must not therefore be rash and follow in the wide open road that leads to destruction, but holding fast to the teachings of the Bible and of the Church, let us by faith and good works walk in the narrow, thorny path, that will conduct us safely to the Kingdom of Heaven. It is the way trodden by Jesus Christ, who enjoins upon us,

that if we will make ourselves worthy of Him, we must "take up our cross and follow Him" on the only road over which it is possible to reach the Eternal Paradise.

CHAPTER XXIII

'THE BIBLE AND THE INVOCATION OF THE SAINTS

As an introduction to the teaching of the Bible on the invocation of the Saints, a cursory inspection of our usual method of seeking benefits will help us to understand more thoroughly its real merits. This phase of our life will tend to convince us how reasonable the invocation of the Saints is.

Not a day passes but what thousands of persons endeavor to obtain some special favor through their friends. Of themselves they have not the influence necessary to have their wishes gratified, consequently they approach their friends, lay before them their needs and plead with them to use their good offices in their behalf. Take, for instance, a person who has been guilty of some serious depredation. He has been apprehended, tried, convicted and sentenced, for a term of years, to prison. He has little or no acquaintance with those in power, who are the only ones that are in a position to afford him relief by remitting in part or in whole the penalty imposed upon him. But he has friends who are influen-

tial with the pardoning powers and he beseeches them to make intercession for him to secure a commutation of his sentence and, if possible, an entire remission of it.

Those friends have a kindly feeling for the unfortunate prisoner, give ear to his pleading, call upon the authorities in his interest, earnestly request them to extend clemency to the condemned man and liberate him from his imprisonment. Their petition is granted and the culprit is given his liberty. Similar cases, of more or less magnitude, occur from time to time in all communities. A loving mother pleads for her wayward boy that he be given a chance to reform; a brother makes interposition for a well-loved brother; a friend prays that his companion be dealt with leniently; all intercede for the unfortunate ones who are very close and dear to them. There is no criticism of such prayers and supplications, but they are rather commended and looked upon as most natural in a friend solicitous for his fellow. No one claims that the friend who seeks to obtain a favor for us is greater than the person who alone has it in his power to grant it. All that we assume is that our friend has more influence with the powers that be and can more readily secure the coveted good.

This being true, why should any one wish to sever relations of a much higher order that pre-

vail between us and the saints of God? The ties that bind us to them are more sacred and serve a higher purpose, that of attaining the possession of the very object of our being, God. We have recourse to His saints, that they make intercession for us to obtain a grace we stand in need of and which we ourselves, owing to our unfriendliness with God, are unworthy of. The sinner is the enemy of God, or if converted from his evil ways, by reason of his past guilt is not so pleasing to Him as are the saints. They are in very truth the friends of God, whose confidence they enjoy, being united with Him. They may, therefore, confidently appeal to Him in favor of the needy or distressed.

If this be so of the saints of God on earth, and Holy Scripture teaches us that it is, why, when they are closer to His throne and in a better position to assist their friends, should they not be asked to do so?

Now, if the prayer of a saint in heaven be inconsistent with what we profess concerning our Lord's mediation, as some claim, the prayer of the same saint, while on earth, could not be otherwise considered than ineffectual also. But it is contrary to reason to believe that we can be of greater service to our friends when we have but a scant acquaintance with those in authority, than

when we are of the very household of those in power.

The same holds good for the saints. If they can help us by their prayers while on earth, they are even better able to do so when they have been welcomed into the very home of God, into eternal glory. Nothing is more natural. To think otherwise would be a travesty on friendship. But can we pray for one another here and are we benefited by the prayers of the saints who have not yet been dissolved and united with Christ?

We shall let the Bible give the answer. St. Paul, writing to the Colossians, reminds them of the interest he has in them: "We give thanks," he says, "to God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, praying always for you." (Col. i, 3.) "Pray one for another," exhorts St. James, "that you may be saved." (Jas. v, 16.) Charity urges us to pray for each other in order that we may find favor in the sight of God.

"For God is my witness," declares the Apostle, "whom I serve in my spirit in the gospel of his Son, that without ceasing I make a commemoration of you; always in my prayers making request, if by any means now at length I may have a prosperous journey, by the will of God, to come unto you." (Rom. i, 9-10.) And to the Colos-

sians he counsels that they "Be instant in prayer, watching in it with thanksgiving, praying withal for us also." (Col. iv, 2, 3.) "I desire, therefore," he commends to Timothy, "first of all, that supplications, prayers, intercessions and thanksgiving be made for all men." (I Tim. ii, 1.)

When St. Peter, the chief shepherd of the faithful and their most beloved, had been apprehended and cast into prison by the command of Herod, prayers were constantly offered for him. "Peter therefore was kept in prison; but prayer was made without ceasing by the Church unto God for him." (Acts xii, 5.) Daily rose those prayers to the seat of eternal mercy and help, until it pleased God to grant them by sending one of His angels to break the chains that bound His servant and free him from prison. "Now I know," said St. Peter, "in very deed that the Lord hath sent his angel, and hath delivered me out of the hand of Herod, and from all the expectation of the people of the Jews." (Acts. xii, 11.)

St. Paul supplicates God in special prayer that He bless the Colossians. "Therefore, we also, from the day that we heard it, cease not to pray for you, and to beg that you may be filled with the knowledge of his will, in all wisdom and spiritual understanding." (Col. i, 9.)

Our Lord bids us to pray even for our enemies:

"Pray for them that persecute and calumniate you." (Matt. v, 44.)

He Himself prayed for His Apostles: "Holy Father, keep them in thy name whom thou hast given me; that they may be one, as we also are." (John xvii, 11.) And while on the wood of the Cross, did He not supplicate in prayer His heavenly Father for His murderers: "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do"? (Luke xxiii, 34.)

Everywhere in the epistles of the Apostle of the Gentiles there is a plea for prayers: "You helping withal in prayer for us: that for this gift obtained for us, by the means of many persons, thanks may be given by many in our behalf." (II Cor. i, 11.) "And in their praying for you, being desirous of you, because of the excellent grace of God in you." (II Cor. ix, 14.) "Now we pray God, that you may do no evil, not that we may appear approved, but that you may do that which is good." (II Cor. xiii, 7.) "For the rest, brethren, pray for us, that the word of God may run, and may be glorified, even as among you." (II Thess. iii, 1.) "And may the God of peace himself sanctify you in all things; that your whole spirit, and soul, and body, may be preserved blameless in the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." And, "Brethren, pray for us." (I Thess. v, 23, 25.) "Pray for us." (Heb. xiii,

18.) And in the 'Acts of the Apostles, "Who, when they were come, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost." (Acts viii, 15.)

Is it not the belief of all Christians that the saints of God, whether in heaven or on earth, are members of the same blessed family and have great concern for one another; else why should they repeat the Apostles' Creed "I believe in the Communion of Saints"? Though we could continue to cite from the Holy Scriptures many other passages on this subject, I will ask you to recall with me one notable instance which is from the very lips of Jesus Christ. The Apostles, witnesses of the assiduity and devotion of their Divine Master in prayer, asked Him to teach them how to pray. Jesus answering them, said: "Thus therefore shall you pray: Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our supersubstantial bread. And forgive us our debts, as we also forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation. But deliver us from evil. Amen."

(Matt. vi, 9-13.)

Does not the Savior in this most beautiful of all prayers remind us of the sacred obligation we have of praying fervently for one another? For He tells us, Thus therefore shall you pray: Our Father who art in heaven; give *us* this day

our supersubstantial bread, forgive us our debts, as we also forgive our debtors; lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

Now we have in the Old Testament the plainest assurances that God does give heed to the prayers of His saints and angels, and that they plead constantly for us. In Daniel it is related that God sent an angel to explain to him the meaning of his vision. "And I heard the voice of a man between Ulai: and he called, and said: Gabriel, make this man to understand the vision." (Dan. viii, 16.) Again: "As I was yet speaking in prayer, behold the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning, flying swiftly, touched me at the time of the evening sacrifice." (Dan. ix, 21.) And: "At that time shall Michael rise up, the great prince, who standeth for the children of thy people: and a time shall come such as never was from the time that nations began even until that time. And at that time shall thy people be saved, every one that shall be found written in the Book." (Dan. xii, 1.)

In the book of Tobias we find that an angel of God spoke in this wise to Tobias: "When thou didst pray with tears, and didst bury the dead, and didst leave thy dinner and hide the dead by day in thy house, and bury them by night, I offered thy prayers to the Lord." (Tob. xii, 12.)

Through the prayers of Moses, the Amalekites

are defeated (Exod. xvii, 11); by prayer he appeased God's wrath when He had in mind to destroy the Israelites (Num.-xiv); God blesses Isaac on account of his servant Abraham (Gen. xxvi, 24); and He favors the Egyptians for Joseph's sake. (Gen. xxxix, 5.)

Those who pretended to be the friends of the holy man Job, were told by God to seek him and have him pray for them, showing, in so doing, that He often prefers the prayers of others to our own. "Go," said God to Eliphaz the Themanite and his two friends, "to my servant Job, and offer for yourselves a holocaust: and my servant Job shall pray for you: his face I will accept, that folly be not imputed to you: for you have not spoken right things before me, as my servant Job hath." (Job xlvi, 8.)

The Bible shows clearly that Christ our Lord knew that the Jews believed in the good services rendered to mankind by saints and angels, because He strengthens their faith in such intervention. "Even so," says Christ, "there shall be joy in heaven upon one sinner that doth penance, more than upon ninety-nine just who need not penance." And again he says: "So I say to you, there shall be joy before the angels of God upon one sinner doing penance." (Luke xv, 7, 10.)

Now St. Matthew likens the saints of God to

His angels: "But (they) shall be as the angels of God in heaven." (Matt. xxii, 30.)

"See," admonishes our Lord, "that you despise not one of these little ones, for I say to you, that their angels in heaven always see the face of my Father who is in heaven." (Matt. xviii, 10.)

The saints of God are the just among men and the blessed who have won heaven.

"To the Church of God that is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all that invoke the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, in every place of theirs and ours." (I Cor. i, 2.) And, "Paul an Apostle of Jesus Christ, by the will of God, to all the saints who are at Ephesus and to the faithful in Christ Jesus." (Eph. i, 1.)

Those who look with disfavor on the invocation of the Saints accuse the Church of paying worship to them rather than to God. But they err, not knowing that we are as far as they are from worshiping the saints in the sense we worship God. We honor the saints and angels as God's special friends, but not with the honor which belongs to God; in asking them to assist us before the throne of God, we consider Him more magnified than in any other way. For the angels prostrate before Him, adore Him, and present our petitions to Him.

"And when he had opened the book, the four

living creatures, and the four and twenty ancients fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of the saints." (Apocal. v, 8.)

The declaration of St. Augustine on this very point should of itself suffice to brush away every vestige of censure on the teaching of the Church regarding the honor she pays the Saints.

"We worship the martyrs," says this illustrious Doctor, "with that worship of love and fellowship with which, even in this life, holy men are worshipped whose hearts we feel are ready to endure a similar death for evangelical truth.

"But the martyrs more devotedly, because we know their conflicts are over, as also with more confident praise we exalt those who are already triumphant in a happier life than those who are still engaged in battle in this life. But with that worship which in Greek is called *λατρεία*, as it is a kind of service properly due to the Divinity, we *neither worship nor teach to worship other than the one God*.

"To this worship belongs the oblation of sacrifices, and hence they who offer sacrifices to idols are guilty of idolatry, and accordingly we do not offer, or teach to be offered, anything of this kind, either to any martyr, to any holy soul, or to any angel; and whoever falls into this error, is re-

proved by sound teaching, either in the way of correction or of caution." (Lib. XX, No. 21, *Contra Faustum.*) Such has been the uniform teaching and practice of the Church from Apostolic days, hence the Council of Trent has this to say on the invocation of the Saints: "The holy Synod enjoins on all bishops and others who sustain the office and charge of teaching, that, agreeably to the usage of the Catholic and Apostolic Church, received from the primitive times of the Christian religion, and agreeably to the consent of the holy Fathers and to the decrees of sacred councils, they especially instruct the faithful diligently concerning the intercession and invocation of saints, the honor (paid) to relics, and the legitimate use of images; teaching them that the saints, who reign together with Christ, offer up their own prayers to God for men; that it is good and useful suppliantly to invoke them, and to have recourse to their prayers, aid, (and) help, for obtaining benefits from God, through His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who is alone Redeemer and Savior; but that they think impiously who deny that the saints, who enjoy eternal happiness in heaven, are to be invoked; or who assert either that they do not pray for men; or, that the invocation of them to pray for each of us even in particular, is idolatry; or that it is repugnant to the word of God; and is opposed to the honor of the

one mediator of God and men, Christ Jesus; or that it is foolish to supplicate, vocally or mentally, those who reign in heaven." (Sess. xxv.)

The Bible is indeed a fountain, though not the only one, of eternal truths professed by the real believers in its divine revelation. Those who reject all other resources of divine truth, have as their battle cry the Bible, the whole Bible, and nothing but the Bible.

Could I then do better, in order to convince them of the Scriptural truth of the exalted place the saints and angels of God have in heaven, and the honor there done them, and consequently provide them with a marvelous incentive to do likewise, than to give what our Lord Himself says concerning them? "And I say to you," says Christ, "whosoever shall confess me before men, him shall the Son of man also confess before the angels of God. But he that shall deny me before men, shall be denied before the angels of God." (Luke xii, 8, 9.) And "The Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father with his angels: and then will he render to every man according to his works." (Matt. xvi, 27.)

CHAPTER XXIV

THE BIBLE AND THE ANGELS

IT is an incontrovertible fact that belief in the existence of angels has at all times been an article of Christian faith.

Angel is not a word that expresses the notion of some definite nature, according to the teachings of the Fathers and theologians of the Church, but indicates rather an office.

It designates a particular ministry, peculiar to those creatures of God to whom it is applied, and is derived from the Greek word *ἄγγελος*, which signifies messenger.

Angels are so called because they act in their relationship with the world as messengers of God, commissioned by Divine Providence to guard the human race and be present with every man to protect him from evil.

The special superintending Providence, the functions and administration of which are intrusted to angels, appear from a number of examples recorded in the Bible. The Jews, our ancestors in the true religion, believed in this dogma of Christian revelation, and the holy Scriptures of

the Old Testament, with whose preservation they were especially charged, have within their pages numerous proofs of the existence of angels.

“And he (Jacob) saw in his sleep a ladder standing upon the earth, and the top thereof touching heaven: the angels also of God ascending and descending by it.” (Gen. xxviii, 12.)

“The Lord God of heaven, who took me out of my father’s house and out of my native country, who spoke to me, and swore to me, saying: To thy seed will I give this land: he will send his angel before thee, and thou shalt take from thence a wife for my son.” (Gen. xxiv, 7.)

“And the angel of the Lord having found her by a fountain of water in the wilderness, he said to her, Agar, handmaid of Sarai, whence comest thou? and whither goest thou? And she answered: I flee from the face of Sarai, my mistress. And the angel of the Lord said to her: Return to thy mistress and humble thyself under her hand.” (Gen. xvi, 7, 8, 9.)

“And the two angels came to Sodom in the evening, and Lot was sitting in the gate of the city. And seeing them, he rose up and went to meet them; and worshipped prostrate to the ground.” (Gen. xix, i.)

“Thou hast made him [man] a little less than the angels, thou hast crowned him with glory and honour.” (Ps. viii, 6.)

"And he cast himself down, and slept in the shadow of the juniper tree: and behold an angel of the Lord touched him, and said to him: Arise and eat. And the angel of the Lord came again the second time, and touched him and said to him: Arise, eat, for thou hast a great way to go." (III Kings, xix, 5, 7.) "Bless the Lord, all ye his angels; you that are mighty in strength, and execute his word, hearkening to the voice of his orders." (Ps. cii, 20.) The sacred volume abounds in narratives which give us an insight into the magnitude of the benefits conferred on us by the ministry of angels, whose tutelary protection is over all mankind.

One of the cherubim was placed at the gates of Paradise with a flaming sword, a seraph was sent to purify Isaias with a burning ember from the altar, and Archangels were sent at other times,—Raphael to Tobias, Michael to Daniel and St. John, Gabriel to Zachary, the Blessed Virgin and St. Joseph.

An angel illuminated the darkness of the prison cell where St. Peter was imprisoned, awakened him, broke his chains, rent in twain his bonds, commanded him to rise and go with Him. He led him from prison past the guards, threw ajar the prison doors and brought him in safety beyond the reach of the jailer.

The New Testament presents no less an array

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than does the Old Testament of allusions to the angels of God, who are His ministering spirits.

“Whereas angels who are greater in strength and power bring not against themselves a railing judgment.” (II Peter ii, 11.)

“And to the angels indeed he saith: He that maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire.” (Heb. i, 7.)

“And there appeared to him an angel of the Lord, standing on the right side of the altar of incense.” (Luke i, 11.)

“Thinkest thou that I cannot ask my Father, and he will give me presently more than twelve legions of angels?” (Matt. xxvi, 53.)

“If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down, for it is written: That he hath given his angels charge over thee, and in their hands shall they bear thee up, lest perhaps thou dash thy foot against a stone.” (Matt. iv, 6.)

“And he shall send his angels with a trumpet, and a great voice: and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from the farthest parts of the heavens to the utmost bounds of them.” (Matt. xxiv, 31.)

“Now an angel of the Lord spoke to Philip, saying: Arise, go towards the south, to the way that goeth down from Jerusalem into Gaza.” (Acts viii, 26.)

“See that you despise not one of these little

ones: for I say to you, that their angels in heaven always see the face of my Father who is in heaven." (Matt. xviii, 10.)

"And I saw seven angels standing in the presence of God; and there were given to them seven trumpets." (Apoc. viii, 2.)

"So I say to you, there shall be joy before the angels of God upon one sinner doing penance." (Luke xv, 10.)

Most excellent qualities are attributed to the angels in the Scriptures. They are represented as endowed with great virtues and many graces.

Young Tobias, seeking a guide for his journey, speaks thus of the Angel Raphael who was charged with that office. "Then Tobias, going forth, found a beautiful young man, standing girded, and as it were ready to walk. And not knowing that he was an angel of God, saluted him." (Tobias v, 5, 6.) The angels are the protectors of men. "For he hath given his angels charge over thee." (Ps. xc, 11.) "Behold, I will send my angel, who shall go before thee, and keep thee in thy journey, and bring thee into the place I have prepared. Take notice of him, and hear his voice, and do not think him one to be contemned; for he will not forgive thee when thou hast sinned, and my name is in him." (Exod. xxiii, 20, 21.)

"The holy angel of the Lord be with you in

your journey, and bring you through safe, and that you may find all things well about your parents, and my eyes may see your children before I die." (Tobias x, 11.)

Judith rejoices that God's angel enabled her to free her people and keep herself stainless: "But as the same Lord liveth, his angel hath been my keeper both going hence and abiding there, and returning from thence hither; and the Lord hath not suffered me his handmaid to be defiled, but hath brought me back to you without pollution of sin, rejoicing for his victory, for my escape, and for your deliverance." (Judith xiii, 20.)

An angel comes to the rescue of the three children who refuse to adore the golden statue of Nabuchodonosor, and were therefore cast into a fiery furnace: "But the angel of the Lord went down with Azarias and his companions into the furnace; and he drove the flame of the fire out of the furnace; and made the midst of the furnace like the blowing of a wind bringing dew, and the fire touched them not at all, nor troubled them, nor did them any harm." (Dan. iii, 49, 50.)

We must endeavor to live a holy, saintly life, so that we may become like unto the angels and reign with them in heaven, as St. Paul admonishes us. "Now therefore you are no more strangers and foreigners; but you are fellow cit-

izens with the saints, and the domestics of God." (Eph. ii, 19.)

We should never overlook the presence of our angel guardian but should frequently invoke his assistance. Afflict him not by falling away from God. Hence the Prophet Isaias says: "Behold they that see shall cry without, the angels of peace shall weep bitterly." (Isaias xxxiii, 7.)

CHAPTER XXV.

THE BIBLE AND IMAGES

THE aberrations of the human mind are most mysterious. Yet when we recollect that reason bereft of faith is weak and requires to be assisted; that it is corrupt and requires to be cured; that it is changeable and requires to be steadied, we have a solution to the inconsistencies of the human intellect. The claims that are sometimes made in the name of philosophy are travesties on right reason, while numerous pronouncements which are heralded in the name of theology or religion are mere sophisms.

It is a principle of sound philosophy that, the truth of a proposition being universally conceded, it holds equally good for all parties to a controversy on any debated question.

Therefore in matters religious, what all claim to be right and proper, cannot in justice, right reason, or sound theology, be exclusive to any one, but is a paramount privilege to all concerned.

Nevertheless, in the face of this truth, there are those who believe in and practise what they choose to condemn as unrighteous in their neighbor. The making of images is a point at issue.

It is scoffed at in the adherents of the Church by her opponents as contrary to the very first commandment of the decalogue.

"I am the Lord thy God, who brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. Thou shalt not have strange gods before me. Thou shalt not make to thyself a graven thing, nor the likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or in the earth beneath, nor of those things that are in the waters under the earth. Thou shalt not adore them nor serve them." (Exod. xx, 2-5.)

They persistently hold that in accordance with this commandment of God, the making of images is idolatrous.

But why anathematize the Church for what they themselves are extensively engaged in? Do they not make likenesses of things in all precious metals and on canvas? Are not the heroes and heroines worthy of fame represented in statuary and pictures? Can these be compared with the heroes and heroines of holy religion? There is as great a difference between the illustrious personages of the world and the saints of God, as there is between the shadows of night and the brightness of day. If the adversaries of the Church in making images of the men and women whom they will honor, find no contradiction between this practice and the first commandment of God given

to Moses on Mount Sinai, on what grounds can they deny the same privilege to the Church in honoring her distinguished sons and daughters?

Their contention, forsooth, is that they do not adore or serve the images they make. They make no idols of them. Does the Church worship those she has in her churches or other places? Does she look upon them as gods? Far from it. She positively avows she does not, and that it would be idolatrous to do so. The simplest neophyte just being taught the rudiments of holy religion, knows that the Church is as far from adoring pictures or images as she is from paying homage to the sun or moon in the heavens or to the insect that creeps on the earth and that we trample under foot.

She teaches her little children in the very alphabet of Christian doctrine that it would be an idolatrous practice to adore the likenesses of any thing in the heavens above, the earth below or the waters under the earth. May we, she asks the child, pray to images? And what does she tell it? No, by no means; for they have no life or sense to help us.

A very emphatic denial certainly, of any thing savoring of idolatry, for she states in the most positive language that images cannot be worshiped since they have no life or sense, and are unable to see, hear or help us.

But let us proceed a step farther. If the making of images is idol worship and opposed to the first commandment of God, what is to be thought of the pictures, paintings, statues, photographs, or likenesses of every description both of the living and the departed members of a household? They are found in every home. Are they supposed to be penates? Unquestionably, no. But is not this as positively forbidden, according to their interpretation of God's law, as is a real idol?

Yet who of our opponents would brook an insult offered to the picture of any of their dead, or living? Suppose a person were to enter one of our homes and seeing upon the wall the photograph or painting of a beloved mother, should wrest it from its place of honor and trample upon it. Would not the just indignation of the children cause them to resent the outrage and order the miscreant from their house, never to put foot there again?

Think of a foreigner coming within our hospitable borders, who would take up a stone and cast it at the statue of our great and noble George Washington! His very life would be in jeopardy.

Where would be the fine arts, sculpture and painting, if it were idolatry to chisel a beautiful statue from an uncouth block of marble, hewn

from the mountain side, or to paint upon a rough piece of canvas an elegant, masterly picture?

These arts, like two sisters, have but one origin. Design is their soul and rule, though their work is in a different manner and upon different materials. They have many things in common, yet reach their end by widely separate means; sculpture by moulding substances, painting by laying colors on a flat superficies. What a mint of gold it takes to purchase one of those masterpieces of the art of sculpture or that of painting!

And no one looks upon these arts as unworthy of the genius of man, but rather encourages them by the fabulous prices that are paid for the production of the artists. All believe God to be infinite wisdom, goodness, justice, knowledge.

What He does, therefore, or commands to be done must accord with His infinite sanctity and justice, and cannot therefore be blameworthy. To hold otherwise would be blasphemy in the extreme. But God did command His servant Moses to make images. "Thou shalt make also two cherubims of beaten gold, on the two sides of the oracle." (Exod. xxv, 18.)

"And the Lord said to him (Moses): Make a brazen serpent, and set it up for a sign: whosoever being struck shall look on it, shall live. Moses therefore made a brazen serpent, and

set it up for a sign: which when they that were bitten looked upon, they were healed." (Num. xxi, 8, 9.)

In the building of the famed temple of Jerusalem, Solomon adorned it with many images and diverse likenesses, and yet God praised him for having built this temple with all its drawings and images, to His greater honor and glory.

To do therefore what God does, or lauds in others, is the best guarantee we can have that in doing likewise and for the same end, we cannot go astray, but on the contrary will please Him.

In the first commandment, God tells the people of Israel that He alone is their God and reminds them of all the blessings He lavished upon them. He then bids them beware of false gods and have no strange gods before Him. But how could they become an idolatrous people?

He indicates to them how they could fall into this egregious error, by making images and adoring them as their gods. He does not forbid the making of images for purposes not condemned by Him in the first commandment. This fact is accepted and upheld by the enemies of the Church, when they aver that God does not forbid pictures, images, photographs or likenesses, except in so far as we make them our gods. Sculpture and painting, or other methods of making images or pictures, are not condemned. God

adds: "Thou shalt not adore nor serve them." If they are not to be made, then they could not be used as idols. It is clear therefore that He simply reprobates making them our gods.

He could not punish us for making images, but only for adoring them, since He Himself commanded that they should be made and should adorn the temple of Jerusalem. "And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying: Behold, I have called by name Beseleel the son of Uri the son of Hur of the tribe of Juda. And I have filled him with the spirit of God, with wisdom, understanding and knowledge in all manner of work. To devise whatsoever may be artificially made of gold and silver, and brass, of marble, and precious stones and variety of wood." (Exod. xxxi, 1-5.)

The Scriptures also bear testimony to the lawfulness of making images.

"Thence will I give orders, and will speak to thee over the propitiatory, and from the midst of the two cherubims, which shall be upon the ark of the testimony, all things which I will command the children of Israel by thee." (Exod. xxv, 22.)

"The top of the throne was round behind: and there were two hands on either side holding the seat: and two lions stood, one at each hand. And twelve little lions stood upon the six steps on the one side and on the other." (III Kings, x, 19-20.)

"And it stood upon twelve oxen, of which three looked towards the north, and three towards the west, and three towards the south, and three towards the east." (III Kings, vii, 25.)

"He graved cherubims on the walls. . . . He made also in the house of the holy of holies two cherubims of image work: and he overlaid them with gold." (II Paral. iii, 7-10.)

The Bible is explicit, therefore, on the subject of images and pictures, and shows their use even in the very house of God, the temple of Jerusalem. What, after all, more attractive, more interesting for a Christian, than to gaze on the image of the Christ, who loves us with an infinite love, dead upon the Cross. Right well does the Council of Trent commend this practice. "And the bishops shall carefully teach this; that by means of the histories of the mysteries of our redemption, portrayed by paintings or other representations, the people are instructed and confirmed in (the habit of) remembering and continually revolving in mind the articles of faith, as also that great profit is derived from all sacred images, not only because the people are thereby admonished of the benefits and gifts bestowed upon them by Christ, but also because the miracles which God has performed by means of the saints and their salutary examples are set before the eyes of the faithful, that so they may give God thanks for those things,

may order their own lives and manners in imitation of the saints, and may be excited to adore and love God, and to cultivate piety." (Sess. xxv.)

Many there are who know but poorly, if at all, how to read or write. They must also be taught the gospel, the life of Christ and of His Saints. But how shall this be done? By object lessons. Hence images in the church, that recall the teachings of the Savior, His life, the work of His redemption, the saints and their virtues and heroism, serve admirably for the instruction of those who are illiterate.

They see before them, as it were, in living form, what they are to believe and what they are expected to practise.

A noble purpose truly is served by the presence of images, paintings and pictures in the church. They help to concentrate the mind on the worth of those whom they represent and encourage us to imitate the virtues that exalted them.

They are as books for the ignorant, who read in those object lessons which they cannot con in the written word. Images are even a help to the learned in assisting them to collect their thoughts and penetrate more deeply into the teachings and mysteries of holy religion.

Whatever tends to increase our knowledge and love of God is praiseworthy. Images and paintings serve well this purpose and are allowable

therefore in our temples and our homes. Hence St. Gregory the Great writes to an iconoclast Bishop, Serenus of Marseilles: "Not without reason has antiquity allowed the stories of saints to be painted in holy places. And we indeed entirely praise thee for not allowing them to be adored, but we blame thee for breaking them. For it is one thing to adore an image, it is quite another thing to learn from the appearance of a picture what we must adore. What books are to those who can read, that is a picture to the ignorant who look at it; in a picture even the unlearned may see what example they would follow; in a picture, they who know no letters may yet read. Hence for barbarians especially, a picture takes the place of a book." (Ep. ix, 105 in Migne, P. L., lxxvii-1027.)

From the lives of many of the illustrious saints of God we learn that it was in the book of the crucifix, while in meditation upon the sufferings and death of the God-man crucified, that they drank deep and frequent draughts from this fountain of the infinite love of Jesus Christ for souls. It was at this refreshing spiritual spring of life that St. Bernard acquired his great spirit of devotion, that St. Augustine obtained his eminent spiritual knowledge, that St. Francis of Assisi conceived his seraphic love; that St. Thomas Aquinas gathered his profound learning.

For this reason the Church in her General Council of Trent declared "that the images of Christ, of the Virgin Mother of God, and of the other Saints, are to be had and retained, especially in churches, and that due honor and veneration are to be given them; not in such a manner, however, as if any divinity or virtue were in them or as if anything were to be asked of them, or as if any trust were to be placed in images, as was of old done by the Gentiles, who placed their hope in idols; but because the honor which is shown them is referred to the prototypes which those images represent; in such wise that by the images which we kiss and before which we uncover the head, and prostrate ourselves we adore Christ; and we venerate the Saints whose likeness they bear. . . ." Sess. xxv.)

By the first commandment therefore we are not forbidden to make images, or honor them, but we are forbidden to adore and to serve them, that is, to make them our gods.

CHAPTER XXVI

THE BIBLE AND THE INCARNATION

THE Incarnation is the center of the religious world. Since the fall of the first man all turns upon Jesus Christ. He is the source of grace and salvation. He is Christianity.

"For God so loved the world as to give his only begotten Son; that whosoever believeth in him may not perish, but may have life everlasting." (John iii, 16.) "And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us." (John i, 14.)

The Word therefore became man. The Second Person of the most Blessed Trinity, the only begotten Son of God, the Father, tabernacling in human flesh, uniting it hypostatically unto Himself, constitutes the great mystery of the Incarnation.

The Incarnation is consequently the hypostatic union of the divine nature and human nature in the person of the Word made flesh and dwelling among us, and is called Jesus Christ.

The Creed of St. Athanasius gives the Catholic Doctrine on the Incarnation in these words: "Our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is

God and man. He is God of the substance of the Father, begotten before the worlds, and He is man of the substance of His mother, born in the world; perfect God and perfect man: Subsisting of a rational soul and human flesh: Equal to the Father according to the Godhead, and less than the Father according to His manhood: Who, although He be both God and man, yet He is not two, but one Christ: One, not by the conversion of the Godhead into flesh, but by taking of the manhood into God: One altogether, not by confusion of substance, but by unity of person. For as the reasonable soul and the body is one man, so God and man is but one Christ. Who suffered for our salvation, descended into hell, rose again the third day from the dead: He ascended into heaven: He sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence He shall come to judge the living and the dead."

Hence Jesus Christ is true God and true man, for in Him the divine nature and human nature are hypostatically united, and although there are two natures and two wills in Him, there is but one Person, the Divine Person of the Logos.

He is true God, for He is eternal, equal to the Father. "The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his ways," declares the Holy Scriptures, "before he made anything from the beginning.

.... The depths were not as yet, and I was already conceived, neither had the fountains of waters as yet sprung out." (Prov. viii, 22, 24.)

These words correspond with those of the Gospel of St. John: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him, and without him was made nothing that was made. In him was life, and the life was the light of men." (John i, 1-4.)

The words of the book of Proverbs correspond also with what St. Paul writes to the Colossians: "Giving thanks to God the Father, who hath . . . delivered us from the power of darkness and hath translated us into the kingdom of the Son of his love, . . . the first born of every creature." (Col. i, 12, 13, 15.) And writing to the Hebrews the Apostle says: "Jesus Christ yesterday and to-day; and the same for ever." (Heb. xiii, 8.) Christ tells the Jews: "Before Abraham was made, I am." (John viii, 58.)

When He commissioned His Apostles to teach all nations, He said to them: "And behold I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world." (Matt. xxviii, 20.)

The Evangelist St. John, having discoursed on the eternal generation of the Word, speaks of His generation in time: "And the Word was made

flesh." (John i, 14.) The Apostle points out first the eternal generation: "In the beginning was the Word." (John i, 1.) In the second place he announces the creation of the world by the Word: "All things were made by him." (John i, 3.) Then he informs us that the Word became man: "And the Word was made flesh." (John i, 14.) The time set in the eternal decrees and secrets of God for the Incarnation of the Word had come, hence the inspired historian indites that "the Angel Gabriel was sent from God into a city of Galilee, called Nazareth, to a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David: And the virgin's name was Mary. And the Angel being come in, said unto her: Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women." (Luke i, 26-28.)

Hearing this salutation, a feeling akin to awe took possession of the humble Virgin's soul: "Who having heard, was troubled at his saying, and thought with herself what manner of salutation this should be. And the Angel said to her: Fear not, Mary, for thou hast found grace with God." (Luke i, 29-30.)

Thereupon God's messenger explains to Mary the object of his coming, the mission upon which the Almighty sent him: "Behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb and shalt bring forth a son,

and thou shalt call his name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Most High, and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of David, his father, and he shall reign in the house of Jacob forever. And of his kingdom there shall be no end." (Luke i, 31, 32, 33.)

Disturbed at such a marvelous revelation the Virgin full of grace humbly answers: "How shall this be done, because I know not man?" (Luke i, 34.) To which the angel makes reply, quieting her fears and informing her of the special intervention of the power of God: "The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Most High shall overshadow thee. And therefore also the Holy which shall be born of thee, shall be called the Son of God." (Luke i, 35.) To give still further assurance to Mary of the great design of God in her regard, the angel discloses to her another wondrous work of His, in favor of her cousin, St. Elizabeth: "And behold thy cousin Elizabeth, she also hath conceived a son in her old age, and this is the sixth month with her that is called barren: Because no word shall be impossible with God." (Luke i, 36-37.) On hearing this, Mary said: "Behold the handmaid of the Lord, be it done to me according to thy word." (Luke i, 38.) "And the angel departed from her." (Luke i, 38.)

In this sublime manner the "Word was made flesh and dwelt among us."

By a fiat of God the world was created, by a fiat of Adam the world was lost, and by a fiat of Mary the Word became man and the world was saved.

The Incarnation is the most perfect work of God. In it He put forth the omnipotence of His right arm, in uniting man unto Himself by a hypostatic union, thus having His only begotten Son to come into the world in the person of Jesus Christ, true God and true man.

The Gospels are the biography of this Godman. From their pages we will glean knowledge of Him. The Evangelists point to a child miraculously announced, who is to be the Savior of His people. He is conceived in the womb of a virgin by the operation of the Holy Ghost. He is born in an abandoned stable, at Bethlehem, where, nevertheless, the shepherds and the princes of the east come and worship Him. His mother presents Him in the temple of Jerusalem according to the law of Moses. At this time there was a man in Jerusalem named Simeon, who was a just man and who waited the consolation of Israel. Word was given him by the Holy Ghost, who was in him, that he should see the Christ of the Lord before he died. Coming by the Spirit into the temple, whither Jesus was brought to have done

for Him according to the law, he took the Child in his arms and said, "Now thou dost dismiss thy servant, O Lord, according to thy word, in peace, because my eyes have seen thy salvation." (Luke ii, 29-30.) The holy man of God recognized in this feeble little Infant that he held in his arms, the Messiah predicted by the Prophets. Yet this child must flee, for, behold "an angel of the Lord appeared in sleep to Joseph, saying: Arise, take the child and His Mother and fly into Egypt. . . . That it might be fulfilled which the Lord spoke by the prophet, saying: Out of Egypt have I called my Son." (Matt. ii, 13, 15.)

After the demise of Herod who sought the death of the Child, Joseph, having been admonished by the angel, returned with the Infant and His Mother into the land of Israel and dwelt in a city called Nazareth.

When the Child was about twelve years old He accompanied Mary and Joseph to Jerusalem according to the custom of the feast of the pasch. Jesus remained in Jerusalem, though His parents returned homeward. But finding that He was not with them nor with their kinfolk and acquaintance, they retrace their steps, seeking Him. They find Him, after three days' anxious search, in the temple, "sitting in the midst of the doctors, hearing them and asking them questions. And all that heard him were as-

tonished at his wisdom and his answers." (Luke ii, 46-47.) "And he went down with them and came to Nazareth and was subject to them." (Luke ii, 51.)

This is all His biographers recount of Him until His baptism by John the Baptist, that is until about the age of thirty.

In considering merely the exterior human life of Jesus, we see a man who is born of an humble virgin, and passes His infancy and young manhood among the people in the home of a poor artisan. Mary and Joseph were well known at Nazareth, hence the countrymen of Jesus, surprised at His wisdom and the wonders He wrought, speak of Him in amazement: "Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know?" (John vi, 42.)

When about thirty years of age, Christ emerges from His retirement and begins His work of evangelizing the people and performing numerous miracles. He makes choice of poor and ignorant followers, to whom He gives the mission of converting the world.

Judea admires His wisdom and is astonished at the dominion He exercises over all nature. Whence came His wisdom and marvelous power over every element of earth? He is God. For such He declares Himself at all times to be. He is the only begotten Son of the Father, having the same nature, the same substance and being equal

to Him in all things: "The Father and I are one."

He asserts that He is God before His Apostles and disciples, the people and His judges; at all times He appropriates to Himself the attributes which belong only to God.

"I am the light of the world." (John viii, 12.) "I am the way, and the truth, and the life." (John xiv, 6.) "He that seeth me seeth the Father also." (John xiv, 9.) He claims the honor and worship, which He avers belong to God alone: "You believe in God, believe also in me"; "and whatsoever you shall ask the Father in my name, that will I do"; "If you shall ask me anything in my name, that will I do"; "If you love me, keep my commandments." (John xiv, 1, 13, 14, 15.) And "That all men may honour the Son, as they honour the Father. He who honoureth not the Son, honoureth not the Father, who sent him." (John v, 23.) When brought before His judges the high priest said to him: "I adjure thee by the living God that thou tell me if thou be Christ, the Son of God. Jesus saith to him, Thou hast said it." (Matt. xxvi, 63-64.)

Such is the public testimony Jesus gives of Himself, and in this sense is it understood by the highest tribunal in the land. He is condemned to death because He calls Himself God, whom the Jews adore. It is hard to believe that men who

have read the Gospels can fail to see the truth of this fact.

The history of Jesus Christ as written by the Evangelists shows Him to be both God and man. We have seen that He is God. He is also man, having a body and a soul like our own, for to Him the Gospels attribute what is proper to man only. He weeps over the death of Lazarus. "Jesus, therefore, when he saw her weeping, and the Jews that were come with her, weeping, groaned in spirit, and troubled himself, and said: Where have you laid him? They say to Him: Lord, come and see. And Jesus wept." (John xi, 33, 34, 35.)

When Jesus retired to the mount of Olives to pray, we find His human will expressly distinguished from His divine will, to which His human will submits: "Father, if thou wilt, remove this chalice from me: but yet not my will but thine be done." (Luke xxii, 42.)

There are, therefore, two natures in Jesus Christ: the divine nature and the human nature. He is true God and true man. Yet these two natures, though entirely distinct, are nevertheless hypostatically united in one person, that of the Word. Man is, in consequence of this hypostatic union of the divine and human natures, elevated, justified, exalted, and it is this that gives special inspiration to all the sacred writers, for

it is the very soul and life of Christianity. To elucidate what was said in the beginning of this chapter, that since the fall of the first man all turns upon Jesus Christ, we will quote what is foretold of Him in the Old Testament and its fulfillment in the New.

The prophets announce that the Messiah will be born of a Virgin, at Bethlehem, that He will appear as a little child, will be adored by the Kings and will be called the anointed, Savior.

“Behold a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and his name shall be called Emmanuel.” (Isa. vii, 14.)

“And thou, Bethlehem Ephrata, art a little one among the thousands of Judea; out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be the ruler in Israel; and his going forth is from the beginning, from the days of eternity.” (Mich. v, 2.)

“For a child is born to us, and a son is given to us, and the government is upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, God the Mighty, the Father of the world to come, the Prince of Peace.” (Isa. ix, 6.)

“The kings of Tharsis and the islands shall offer presents: the kings of the Arabians and of Saba shall bring gifts: And all kings of the earth shall adore him.” (Ps. lxxi, 10, 11.)

“For I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel thy Savior.” (Isa. xlivi, 3.)

"The kings of the earth stood up, and the princes met together, against the Lord, and against his Christ." (Ps. ii, 2.)

In the New Testament we read that "the generation of Christ was in this wise. When as his Mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child, of the Holy Ghost. . . . Now all this was done that it might be fulfilled which the Lord spoke by the prophet, saying: Behold a virgin shall be with child, and bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us." (Matt. i, 18, 22, 23.) "And Joseph also went up from Galilee, out of the city of Nazareth into Judea, to the city of David, which is called Bethlehem. . . . To be enrolled with Mary his espoused wife who was with child. . . . And she brought forth her first-born son and wrapped him up in swaddling clothes and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn." (Luke ii, 4, 5, 7.) "And the angel said to them: Fear not; for behold I bring you glad tidings of great joy, that shall be to all the people. For this day is born to you a Savior, who is Christ the Lord, in the city of David . . . you shall find the infant wrapped in swaddling clothes and laid in a manger." (Luke ii, 10, 11, 12.)

"When Jesus therefore was born in Bethlehem

of Judea, in the days of King Herod, behold there came wise men from the East to Jerusalem, saying, Where is he that is born King of the Jews? For we have seen his star in the East and are come to adore him." (Matt. ii, 1, 2.)

"And entering into the house, they found the child with Mary his Mother, and falling down they adored him; and opening their treasures, they offered him gifts; gold, frankincense, and myrrh." (Matt. ii, 11.)

"And Jacob begot Joseph, the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ." (Matt. i, 16.)

Forecasting the public life of the Messiah, the prophets foretell that a messenger should go before Him; that the Savior should preach the word of God to every one, work miracles, ride into Jerusalem seated upon an ass, and be received by the people as their king. "Behold I send my angel, and he shall prepare the way before my face." (Mal. iii, 1.)

"The spirit of the Lord is upon me, because the Lord hath anointed me; he hath sent me to preach to the meek, to heal the contrite of heart, and to preach a release to the captives, and deliverance to them that are shut up." (Isa. lxi, 1.)

"Then shall the eyes of the blind be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then

shall the lame man leap as a hart, and the tongue of the dumb shall be free." (Isa. xxxv, 5, 6.)

"Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Sion, shout for joy, O daughter of Jerusalem: Behold thy king will come to thee, the just and savior; he is poor, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt, the foal of an ass." (Zach. ix, 9.)

What is here prophesied in the Old Testament of the Messiah is fulfilled in the New Testament. "For this is he of whom it is written: Behold I send my angel before thy face, who shall prepare thy way before thee." (Matt. xi, 10.)

"The spirit of the Lord is upon me. Wherefore he hath anointed me to preach the Gospel to the poor, he hath sent me to heal the contrite heart, to preach deliverance to the captives, and sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord and the day of reward." (Luke iv, 18, 19.)

"And he came near and touched the bier; and they that carried it stood still. And he said: Young man, I say to thee, arise. And he that was dead, sat up and began to speak. And He gave him to his mother." (Luke vii, 14, 15.)

"And when the multitude was put forth, he went in and took her by the hand. And the maid arose." (Matt. ix, 25.)

"When he had said these things, he cried with a loud voice: Lazarus, come forth. And pres-

ently he that had been dead, came forth bound hands and feet with winding bands, and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus said to them, Loose him and let him go." (John xi, 43, 44.) "Jesus saith to him: Arise, take up thy bed and walk." (John v, 8.)

"And on the next day, a great multitude that was come to the festival day, when they had heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem, took branches of palm trees and went forth to meet him and cried: Hosanna, blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord, the King of Israel. And Jesus found a young ass, and sat upon it, as it is written: Fear not, daughter of Sion: behold, thy king cometh, sitting on an ass's colt." (John xii, 12, 13, 14, 15.)

The death of the Savior with the circumstances surrounding it form also a part of prophecy. He is sold for thirty pieces of silver, dies for the sins of man and an eclipse occurs at the time. "And they weighed for my wages thirty pieces of silver." (Zach. xi, 12.)

"And they shall look upon me whom they have pierced." (Zach. xii, 10.) "And they shall say to him: What are these wounds in the midst of thy hands? And he shall say: With these I was wounded in the house of them that loved me." (Zach. xiii, 6.)

"But he was wounded for our iniquities, he was

bruised for our sins: the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and by his bruises we are healed.” (Isa. liii, 5.)

“All we like sheep have gone astray, every one hath turned aside into his own way: and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.” “He was offered because it was his own will, and he opened not his mouth: he shall be led as a sheep to the slaughter and shall be dumb as a lamb before his shearer, and he shall not open his mouth.”

“He was taken away from distress, and from judgment: who shall declare his generation? because he is cut off out of the land of the living: for the wickedness of my people have I struck him.”

“Therefore will I distribute to him very many, and he shall divide the spoils of the strong, because he hath delivered his soul unto death, and was reputed with the wicked: And he hath borne the sins of many, and hath prayed for the transgressors.” (Isa. liii, 6, 7, 8, 12.)

“Shall not the day of the Lord be darkness and not light, and obscurity and no brightness in it?” (Amos v, 20.)

The following recital of those events in the life of Christ is found in the New Testament.

“Then went one of the twelve, who was called Judas Iscariot, to the chief priests, and said to them: What will you give me, and I will deliver

him unto you? But they appointed him thirty pieces of silver.” (Matt. xxvi, 14, 15.)

“Then therefore he delivered him to them to be crucified. And they took Jesus and led him forth. And bearing his own cross, he went forth to that place which is called Calvary, but in Hebrew Golgotha. Where they crucified him, and with him two others, one on each side, and Jesus in the midst.” (John xix, 16, 17, 18.)

“And it was almost the sixth hour, and there was darkness over all the earth until the ninth hour. And the sun was darkened and the veil of the temple was rent in the midst.” (Luke xxiii, 44, 45.)

The events that followed the death of the Messiah: that He should rise from the dead, ascend into heaven, and have a place at the right hand of God are foretold by the prophets. “Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell: nor wilt thou give thy holy one to see corruption.” (Ps. xv, 10.)

“In that day the root of Jesse, who standeth for an ensign of the people, him the Gentiles shall beseech, and his sepulchre shall be glorious.” (Isa. xi, 10.)

“Lift up your gates, O ye princes and be ye lifted up, O eternal gates; and the King of Glory shall enter in. Who is this King of Glory? the Lord who is strong and mighty; the Lord mighty in battle. Lift up your gates, O ye princes, and

be ye lifted up, O eternal gates, and the King of Glory shall enter in. Who is this King of Glory? the Lord of hosts, he is the King of Glory." (Ps. xxiii, 7, 8, 9, 10.)

"The Lord said to my Lord: sit thou at my right hand: Until I make thy enemies thy footstool." (Ps. cix, 1, 2.)

The Evangelists relate the events subsequent to the death of Christ in the following terms: "Why seek you the living with the dead? He is not here, but is risen. Remember how he spoke unto you, when he was yet in Galilee, saying: The Son of man must be delivered into the hands of sinful men and be crucified, and the third day rise again." (Luke xxiv, 5, 6, 7.)

"And it came to pass, whilst he blessed them, he departed from them and was carried up to heaven." (Luke xxiv, 51.)

"But he, being full of the Holy Ghost, looking up steadfastly to heaven, saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God." (Acts vii, 55.)

The Bible attests with the greatest possible certainty that Jesus Christ is true God equal to the Father, and true man having a body and soul like ours. In Him the two natures, the divine and human, are hypostatically united in one person, the divine person, who is Jesus Christ.

The Word testifies of Himself that He is God;

the Father confirms the declarations of His eternal Son by numerous miracles, and the Holy Ghost bears testimony to its truth through the voice of the prophets, who declare that the Christ is God and man. "The Holy Ghost," says the Nicene Creed, "inspired the prophets and spoke by their mouths."

"If we receive the testimony of men, the testimony of God is greater. For this is the testimony of God, which is greater, because he hath testified of his Son. He that believeth in the Son of God, hath the testimony of God in himself. He that believeth not the Son, maketh him a liar: because he believeth not in the testimony which God hath testified of his Son." (I John v, 9, 10.)

There remains but one thing for all true followers of the Crucified Christ,—to proclaim loudly with St. Peter: "Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God."

CHAPTER XXVII

THE BIBLE AND PRIVATE INTERPRETATION

THE question here presented for our consideration is one of paramount importance.

It is not however that the subject under discussion is so profound that much thought, serious study, and great learning are required to determine its merits, but rather, because it is, for very many, like the straw which the drowning man reaches after to save his life. It is the only subterfuge left to those who still pretend to hold to an untenable position, private individual interpretation of the Bible, as their rule of faith. Nor is it a newly discovered source of light whereby truth may be obtained, but we find the same teaching in the early days of Christianity. The Arians, Gnostics, Manicheans, Montanists, Donatists, the sectarians of the first centuries appealed to the private individual interpretation of the Scriptures as pertinaciously as do the numberless sects of the present day.

There is no word nor deed of man, of whatever kind it may chance to be, that he does not give

some reason for. The motive may be worthy or unworthy, righteous or unrighteous, reasonable or unreasonable, yet, at least, it is an apology for what he does.

The simplest method in combating false teachings or erroneous doctrines is, generally speaking, preferable to more elaborate and intricate reasonings. Hence for the topic before us, a ready solution of its pretension offers itself in the procedure of states and governments in regard to their constitutions, or those written documents whereby they seek to safeguard themselves against all disturbers of good order and to preserve their very existence.

Take for instance the Constitution of the United States. It is an instrument of writing acknowledged to be of rare human wisdom. It purports to secure to all who shall live under the beneficent influence of its mandates, their unalienable rights, among which are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

To reach these privileges granted by the Constitution, did the framers of this great document distribute it among the citizens of the Republic, and leave it to each one's private individual interpretation, as to how they should understand its meaning, and obtain in keeping with each one's view of it the blessings it proposes shall be equally enjoyed by all? By no means. When

questions arise in regard to its meaning, can each citizen follow what appears to him, after reading it, to be the mind of the Fathers of the Republic who wrote it? Far from it.

No individual citizen has this right, nor have a number of them banded together any greater privilege than the individual. What then is done in the premises?

The highest tribunal in the land is called upon to determine the mooted questions concerning the sense of the instrument, and when this august body has passed upon the merits of the constitutional point involved, all the citizens of the country are required to accept its verdict and abide by it.

If every person were allowed, after reading the Constitution, to put his own private individual construction on it, how little of it would survive as intended by its framers, and how quickly the Republic would be rent into numerous petty states because of the conflicting differences anent its Constitution.

This being true in merely human affairs, in a purely human government, must we not look for and expect a similar safeguard in a superior order of things, the spiritual order, the religious world, for the Bible, the word of God, which is intended to secure for those of Christ's kingdom on earth, who are true to its mandates, that eternal life and

happiness promised by the Divine Founder of Christianity?

It would be mockery of the infinite wisdom of God to entertain the thought that He could leave His word to the caprice of men and nations, so as to make it signify black and white, good and evil, right and wrong at the same time, according to the good pleasure of each individual reader.

Other it could not be if the Bible was left subject to the vagaries of the human mind, or if private individual interpretation could claim to be its interpreter of last resort. The very presence of hundreds of antagonistic sects, all claiming the Bible as their rule of faith, is an irrefutable proof of our contention. The fact stands, and facts are stubborn things that cannot, at will, be swept aside or ignored. They speak for themselves. But what have we in the Bible?

The Old Testament contains the earliest traditions of mankind, the laws, the ritual, the history, the moral and devotional literature of the Jewish people living for two thousand years or more under the special providence of God.

All the writings presuppose the faith of that people as already known. They were written to believers in the Jewish faith.

Were the Jews allowed to read the Old Testament, which was all there was of the Scriptures in

that day, and follow their private individual interpretation of it? They certainly were not. They looked up to the priests as their teachers in religion.

“Amarias the priest, your high priest, shall be chief in the things which regard God.” (II Paral. xix, 11.) God gives command to the priests to “teach the children of Israel all my ordinances which the Lord hath spoken to them by the hand of Moses.” (Levit. x, 11.) “Then Esdras the priest brought the law before the multitude of men and women, and all those that could understand, in the first day of the seventh month.” (II Esdras viii, 2.) “And Esdras opened the book before all the people: for he was above all the people, and when he had opened it, all the people stood.” (II Esdras viii, 5.) “The Levites made silence among the people to hear the law.” (II Esdras viii, 7.) “And they read in the book of the law of God, distinctly and plainly to be understood.” (II Esdras viii, 8.)

“For the lips of the priest shall keep knowledge, and they shall seek the law at his mouth: because he is the angel of the Lord of hosts.” (Mal. ii, 7.)

It is therefore plain that the priests were charged with expounding the law and teaching to the people the word of God.

The New Testament contains brief synopses of

the life, sayings, doings and sufferings of Our Lord while living among men, the Acts of the Apostles, together with doctrinal, moral and monitory letters addressed by St. Paul to several particular Churches and to the Hebrews, by St. Peter, St. James, St. John and St. Jude to the Church at large, two letters to private individuals, and that remarkable book, the Apocalypse. All these writings presuppose the faith to have been already revealed and received. In no place do they lay claim to be the original medium of Christianity. They refer to it as something that is already known. They endeavor to explain it more fully and bring the children of the Church to be faithful to what it requires of them. To have an intelligent understanding of the Scriptures of the New Testament, they must be read in the light of the Christian faith. If they are otherwise read they may be made to favor as many erroneous teachings as there are men who propound their individual tenets.

As the priests of the Old Law were required to teach the people the word of God, so those under the New Dispensation are appointed to instruct the people and bear to them the word of God.

Christ our Lord bids the Apostles and their successors to go "teach ye all nations; baptizing

them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and behold I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world." (Matt. xxviii, 19, 20.)

It is therefore the duty of the priest to teach the word of God and to explain it to the faithful, for if it is left to themselves there is danger of perversion.

"Our most dear brother Paul, according to the wisdom given to him, hath written to you, as also in all his Epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which there are some things hard to be understood, which the unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other Scriptures, to their own perdition." (II Peter iii, 15, 16.)

As an illustration of what St. Peter says in regard to the Scriptures being hard to understand, we have but to read in the Acts of the Apostles, chapter eighth, what Philip said to the Eunuch; "Understandest thou what thou readest?" Who answered: "How can I, unless some one show me?"

St. Peter assures us positively that private individual interpretation of the Bible is not allowed: "Understanding this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is made by private interpretation." (II Peter i, 20.)

Christ Jesus made His revelation and deposited it with His Apostles. These He commissioned to go forth and teach it to all nations. The Apostles are, therefore, competent witnesses to the fact that Christ made and deposited His revelation with them. Now the Church, which is the identical Apostolic body, continues without any break down to our day, and is a credible witness to the fact of this divine revelation.

Her commission, which is of God, commands all men to accept what she teaches as His word. If she could err in teaching, God Himself might lead men to believe falsehood, which cannot be, since He can neither deceive nor be deceived. The commission given to the Church or Apostolic body by Jesus Christ is clearly set forth in His own words. "As the Father hath sent me, I also send you," said our Lord to His Apostles. (John xx, 21.) "All power is given to me in heaven and on earth; going therefore teach ye all nations." (Matt. xxviii, 18 sq.). "Preach the Gospel to every creature." (Mark xvi, 15.) "Teach them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." (Matt. xxviii, 20.) "He that heareth you heareth me, and he that despiseth you despiseth me." (Luke x, 16.)

We here see, according to the Gospel, that our Lord empowers His Apostles, clothing them with His own authority, to teach. This divine com-

mission carries with it necessarily the divine pledge of infallibility. Reason itself, therefore, demands that we receive and obey as the word of God, whatever the Church teaches as His word, since His word is eternal truth.

The Church is, therefore, the interpreter of the word of God, whether it be found in the Bible or handed down by tradition, for she alone has the promise of her Divine Founder, "that the powers of hell shall not prevail against her." (Matt. xvi, 18.) That "the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things, and bring all things to your mind, whatsoever I shall have said to you." (John xiv, 26.) "And behold I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world." (Matt. xxviii, 20.) Hence the Apostle writes that the Church is "the pillar and ground of the truth." (I Tim. iii, 15.) To her and to her alone does it belong to give that authoritative interpretation of the Bible which, in matters of faith and morals, ought to determine its meaning with a supreme authority binding on all.

CHAPTER XXVIII

THE BIBLE AND THE SECTS

As a connecting link between the subject of the present chapter and that of the preceding one, which are close akin, I may be allowed to give the views of the Bishop of Meaux, the illustrious Bossuet, on both of them.

Discoursing on the revolt of the sixteenth century, he says: "Every man erects a tribunal for himself, where he becomes the arbiter of his own belief. Although the innovators wished to restrain the minds of men within the limits of Holy Scripture, yet as each individual was constituted its interpreter, and was to believe that the Holy Scripture would discover to him its meaning, all were authorized to worship their own invention, to consecrate their own errors, and to place the seal of the Divinity on their own thoughts. It was then foreseen that by this unbridled license sects would be multiplied to infinity, and that while some would not cease to dispute or to hold their reveries for inspirations, others, wearied by visions of folly, and not able to recognize the majesty of religion, torn asunder by so many sects,

would seek at length a fatal repose and complete independence in indifference to all religion, or atheism."

The "open Bible" or free individual interpretation of it, is shown by the great Bishop to be the prolific source of an infinity of sects. There is, then, no room for surprise that the Apostles, as the Scriptures bear ample testimony, denounce in strongest terms the slightest variation from the teachings of Christ, deposited with them to be upheld in their entirety, without change, or alteration, and to be conveyed to all men and nations. Were it otherwise we should, indeed, be bewildered to know why they were silent on a matter so vital to the Church of God.

The Apostles realized fully that it was a sacred duty imposed upon them to guard with jealous care the deposit of faith, entrusted by the Divine Teacher to their keeping. They were required to preserve it pure, integral, and incorrupt, opposing any mixture of the least element that would take from or add to it. As evidence of this we need but cite the convening of the first council of the Church at Jerusalem to condemn a false doctrine that had found its way among some who had embraced Christianity. Certain Jewish converts demanded that the Gentile converts, in order to be saved, should superadd the observances of the Mosaical law to those of the New Gospel.

To some, this might at first blush seem a trivial matter, one the Apostles could easily afford to overlook, especially as those who demanded this submission to legal prescriptions as a necessary qualification for a Gentile becoming a member of the Church, had embraced the Christian faith.

The Apostles did not think so. It was an innovation of the sacred deposit of faith they had received from the Divine Founder of Christianity, and whatever might be the consequence, even though many should turn their back upon them, who had followed them until then, they felt called upon to condemn it.

The result of their deliberation on the question is given to us in the Acts of the Apostles: "Then it pleased the Apostles and ancients, with the whole Church, to choose men of their own company, and to send to Antioch, with Paul and Barnabas, namely Judas, who was surnamed Barsabas, and Silas, chief men among the brethren. Writing by their hands: the Apostles and ancients, brethren, to the brethren of the Gentiles that are at Antioch, and in Syria and Cilicia, greeting. Forasmuch as we have heard, that some going out from us have troubled you with words, subverting your souls; to whom we gave no commandment: it hath seemed good to us, being assembled together, to choose out men, and to

send them unto you, with our well beloved Barnabas and Paul: Men that have given their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. We have sent therefore Judas and Silas, who themselves also will, by word of mouth, tell you the same things. For it has seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us, to lay no further burden upon you than these necessary things: That you abstain from things sacrificed to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication; from which things keeping yourselves, you shall do well. Fare ye well." (Acts xv, 22-29.)

The importance and far reaching result of this decree is clearly brought out by the efforts of St. Paul to encourage the Christians to unhesitatingly abide by it. "And he (St. Paul) went through Syria and Cilicia, confirming the churches, commanding them to keep the precepts of the Apostles and the ancients." (Acts xv, 41.)

"And as they passed through the cities, they delivered unto them the decrees for to keep, that were decreed by the Apostles and ancients who were at Jerusalem." (Acts xvi, 4.)

The Galatians were brought into the Church by the preaching of St. Paul. Subsequently false teachers, who had been Jews, and who were for compelling all Christians, even those who had

been Gentiles, to submit to circumcision and other Mosaical observances, seduced them.

The Apostle writes to them refuting the pernicious doctrine of those false teachers. "I wonder that you are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ, unto another Gospel. Which is not another, only there are some that trouble you, and would pervert the Gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach a gospel to you besides that which we have preached to you, let him be anathema. As we said before, so now I say again: If any one preach to you a gospel, besides that which you have received, let him be anathema." (Gal. i, 6-9.)

Is it possible to believe that he who so drastically condemned those Jewish converts to Christianity who would force upon the Church an ancient Mosaic ceremonial law, which was not to continue under the new dispensation, would tolerate those who receive the word of God only on condition that they have the free exercise of their private judgment and be allowed to receive or reject any particular doctrine according to their own individual interpretation of what is contained in the Bible?

But let us examine the Scriptures and see in what manner they look upon the sects. "If any

man teach otherwise and consent not to the sound words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to that doctrine which is according to godliness: he is proud, knowing nothing, but sick about questions and strifes of words; from which arise envies, contentions, blasphemies, evil suspicions, conflicts of men corrupted in mind, and who are destitute of the truth, supposing gain to be godliness." (I Tim. vi, 3-5.)

St. Peter in his second epistle warns the faithful against false teachers and sects of perdition as he calls them.

"But there were also false prophets among the people, even as there shall be among you lying teachers, who shall bring in sects of perdition and deny the Lord who bought them: bringing upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their riotousness, through whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of. . . . And especially them who walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness, and despise government, audacious, self-willed, they fear not to bring in sects, blaspheming. . . . Promising them liberty, whereas they themselves are the slaves of corruption." (II Peter ii, 1, 2, 10, 19.)

In his Epistle to the Romans, St. Paul warns them against all that should teach doctrines contrary to those they had learned. "Now, I beseech you, brethren, to mark them who make dis-

sensions and offences contrary to the doctrine which you have learned, and avoid them. For they that are such, serve not Christ our Lord, but their own belly; and by pleasing speeches and good words, seduce the hearts of the innocent.” (Rom. xvi, 17, 18.)

“Take heed to yourselves,” says St. Paul in the Acts of the Apostles, “and to the whole flock, wherein the Holy Ghost hath placed you bishops, to rule the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. I know that after my departure, ravening wolves will enter in among you, not sparing the flock. And of your own selves shall arise men speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them.” (Acts xx, 28, 29, 30.)

In accordance with these teachings of the Bible the Church commands all to “stand fast in one spirit, with one mind labouring together for the faith of the Gospel.” (Phil. i, 27.) So that there may be “one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in us all.” (Eph. iv, 5.)

Those, on the other hand, who claim the right of private judgment or individual interpretation of the Bible find themselves deluged with conflicting doctrines that give rise to sects without number, for “they are carried away with various and strange doctrines.”

The Scriptures exhort us to “contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints” (Jude i, 3); to hear the church “and if he will not hear the Church, let him be to thee as the heathen and publican.” (Matt. xviii, 17.)

“We are of God,” writes St. John, “he that knoweth God, heareth us; he that is not of God, heareth us not; by this we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of error.” (I John iv, 6.)

The Bible therefore condemns in the strongest language all sects, all schisms, all heresies, in a word all departure from the one true faith once delivered to the saints, for there can be but one true Church of Jesus Christ, which is “the pillar and ground of truth,” and which is the same “yesterday, to-day and forever”—the Catholic Church; the Church of the Bible.

CHAPTER XXIX

THE BIBLE AND HELL

THERE is no article of the Catholic faith more concisely taught in the Holy Scriptures than the dogma of the existence of hell. There was a time when all Christians, before and since the days of the so-called reformation, professed their firm belief in this doctrine of the Catholic Church. But with the ever-increasing multiplication of false doctrines and pseudo-teachers of the Bible, the Scriptural declaration on the existence of hell has fared no better at their hands than the bulk of divine truths. Indeed the would-be prophets and expounders of another gospel are no longer sincerely Christians.

They receive the Bible, just as they do Virgil or Homer, accepting only what seems to conform to their distorted ideas of religion or what they fancy gives a semblance of verity to their erroneous notions.

The thought of hell is not comforting to those “whose God is their belly.” Hence those shepherds of souls spoken of in the Gospel, who are

not true shepherds, abandon their flocks to ravenous wolves that invade them under the cover of depraved human passions. They cater to the ungodly ways of the worldly wise, fearing to confront them with the plain, candid recital of Scriptural truths, as did the great man of God, John the Baptist, who, even in the face of death, withheld the King, denouncing his adulterous life, lest forsooth they should place in jeopardy their occupation. Speak to us of God or religion, says the world, but speak to us of them in so far as it will not disturb us in our wild pursuit of worldly pleasures.

If the Bible declares "that the fool saith in his heart, there is no God," only the fool will aver that there is no hell.

So deep seated in the human breast is this truth of divine revelation, that he who would feign believe that there is no hell, creates it already in his heart, to follow him through life like a nemesis.

There is a hell.

This dogma of Christian faith, the eternal punishment after death of the reprobate, is distinctly taught in the Old Testament, and Christ our Lord does no more than to confirm it, albeit enlarging upon it. The Prophet Isaias, speaking of the chastisement of the wicked, says: "Their worm shall not die, and their fire shall not be quenched: and they shall be a loathsome sight to

all flesh." (Isa. lxvi, 24.) Christ Jesus, as we shall presently show from the New Testament, refers to these words of Isaias in speaking of the tortures of the damned. "Which of you," says the same prophet, "can dwell with devouring fire? Which of you shall dwell with everlasting burnings?" (Isa. xxxiii, 14.)

Referring to the great day of the resurrection, the prophet Daniel tells us that "many of those that sleep in the dust of the earth, shall awake: some unto life everlasting, and others unto reproach, to see it always. But they that are learned shall shine as the brightness of the firmament: and they that instruct many to justice, as stars for all eternity." (Dan. xii, 2, 3.) The man of God declares the opprobrium of the un-holy will be eternal as the glory of the saints will be everlasting.

In the book of Job we also have reference made to the dismal abode of the unrighteous. "Before I go, and return no more, to a land that is dark and covered with the mist of death: A land of misery and darkness, where the shadow of death, and no order, but everlasting sorrow dwelleth." (Job x, 21, 22.)

The inspired writer of the Book of Wisdom discourses on the unhappiness of the wicked in these words: "And if they die quickly, they shall have no hope, nor speech of comfort in the

day of trial. For dreadful are the ends of a wicked race." (Wis. iii, 18, 19.) "They shall see him and shall despise him; but the Lord shall laugh them to scorn." (Wis. iv, 18.) "For the hope of the wicked is as dust, which is blown away by the wind, and as a thin froth, which is dispersed by the storm: and a smoke that is scattered abroad by the wind: and as the remembrance of a guest of one day that passeth by. But the just shall live forever more: and their reward is with the Lord, and the care of them with the Most High." (Wis. v, 15, 16.)

Now scan the pages of the New Testament and read what Jesus Christ teaches on the subject of hell. "And if thy hand scandalize thee, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, than having two hands, to go into hell, into unquenchable fire: where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not extinguished. And if thy foot scandalize thee, cut it off. It is better for thee to enter lame into life everlasting, than having two feet, to be cast into the hell of unquenchable fire: where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not extinguished. And if thy eye scandalize thee, pluck it out: It is better for thee with one eye to enter into the kingdom of God, than having two eyes, to be cast into the hell of fire: where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not extinguished." (Mark ix, 42-47.)

Our Lord emphasises the fact that the pains of hell shall endure throughout all eternity and repeats thrice the warning of Isaias, the prophet, that the worm that gnaweth the wicked shall not die, nor shall the fire, wherein they suffer, be quenched forever.

In alluding to the events that shall come to pass on the day of general judgment, Jesus puts into the mouth of the Son of man the following words: "Then he shall say to them also that shall be on his left hand: Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, which was prepared for the devil and his angels. . . . And when the Son of Man shall come in his majesty, and all the angels with him, then shall he sit upon the seat of his majesty: and all nations shall be gathered together before him, and he shall separate them, one from another, as the shepherd separateth the sheep from the goats. And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on his left. Then shall the King say to them that shall be on his right hand: Come, ye blessed of my Father, possess ye the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. . . . And these [the reprobates] shall go into everlasting punishment, but the just, into life everlasting." (Matt. xxv, 41, 31, 32, 33, 34, 46.)

The punishment of the wicked shall endure, even as the life of the just shall know no end.

The Bible convicts of wanton disregard for the word of God those who, fawningly or otherwise, reject its teaching on the eternal pains of the reprobate in hell. Hence to those falsifiers of the Bible I may be allowed to sound the warning of St. Augustine: "They who desire to be rid of eternal punishment, ought to abstain from arguing against God, and rather, while yet there is opportunity, obey the divine commands." (*De Civ. Dei*, lib. *xxi*, 23.)

CHAPTER XXX

THE BIBLE AND THE BLESSED VIRGIN

WE have reached the closing pages of our treatise on the Catholic Church, the true Church of the Bible. Unlike, however, the last book of the Holy Scriptures, which, for the greater part, is shrouded in the deepest mystery, the subject of the final chapter of this work is luminous. It begins with the first pages of the Old Testament and runs like seams of gold throughout the priceless rock of the entire Bible. It moves, side by side, with the Alpha and Omega of the whole alphabet of the Scriptures.

In the beginning God said to the serpent who brought untold miseries, even death itself upon man, the king of His creation: "I will put enmities between thee and the woman, and thy seed and her seed: She shall crush thy head, and thou shalt lie in wait for her heel." (Gen. iii, 15.) And of this woman it is said in the Apocalypse: "And a great sign appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars. . . . And she brought forth a man child, who was

to rule all nations with an iron rod: and her son was taken up to God, and to his throne." (Apoc. xii, 1, 5.) "The seed of the woman shall crush thy head"; "And she brought forth a man child."

A Mother and her child were, therefore, destined to bring back blessing to the earth and reconcile earth with heaven. The promise was God's own, and was made to man on the threshold of the paradise he had lost; between it and a paradise to be gained this prophecy was to be and to remain the only connecting link. It was a light set in the far future of the world, towards which all men should constantly look to guide their steps in the dark and bewildering paths of life.

And whether in the shape of prophecy, as given to them of old, or as a fulfillment of prophecy, as we recognize it, it is the single divine principle of the world's salvation.

No scheme or invention of the human intellect was ever to usurp its place; that would be Satan rising again into the seat of God. Every truth to follow from heaven would come only as additional light to this truth; and all truth of earth, of what kind soever, is to find its final explanation solely in the supremacy of this truth. The ever-expanding history of the Church, since she heard it, is but the growth of this mustard seed filling the earth; nor is there any other key to the entangled

history of the nations than how they stand in the presence of this prophecy. For either they accept its truth, and have the light of God's countenance upon them, or they reject it, and rage as the Psalmist says, "against the Lord and against his Christ." (Ps. ii, 2.)

Holy men and women now heard whisperings from heaven that their eyes should see the salvation of Israel. The happy day was near at hand, and at last it dawned upon the earth. Four thousand years of long watching and waiting were over. The prophecy spoken against the author of man's woe had reached its fulfillment, and pointing to a little child and His mother Mary, a virgin still, always a virgin, virgin most pure, most holy, most humble, most amiable, most loving, most venerable, most powerful, most faithful, the Church in her joy exclaimed: "Lo this is our God, we have waited for him, and he will save us." (Isa. xxv, 9.)

This little child is therefore both God and man. As God, He is the Creator of the Virgin Mary, as man He is her son. Hence the Apostle St. John tells us "that every spirit that dissolveth Jesus, is not of God; and this is that Antichrist of whom ye have heard that he cometh, and is now already in the world." (I John iv, 3.) To dissolve Christ is to worship Him in His divine nature only, and refuse to worship Him in His human

nature. It is to deny to Mary the prerogative of being the mother of God, for God incarnate is still God, and having assumed flesh is no less God in His human nature than in His divine nature. He is the one Christ, the one Divine Person, who was conceived in the womb of the ever blessed Virgin Mary, assuming to Himself the nature of man, and, as to nature, at once God and man.

We cannot therefore honor the Son without honoring the mother, nor can we honor the mother without honoring the Son. Only those who reject the Incarnation, those who refuse to acknowledge that salvation is from God in the flesh, deny to Mary the honor due her. But the Holy Scriptures throughout their length and breadth associate her with Jesus, true God and true man, as His mother.

Of her did God speak when He said to the serpent: "She shall crush thy head"; when He sent His angel to announce to her that He had chosen her to be the mother of His divine Son, Jesus: "Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with thee," and who answered; "be it done unto me according to thy word." "And the word was made flesh and dwelt amongst us." 'Twas to her that Jesus was subject at Nazareth, of her did He speak when from His blood-stained rood He said to St. John: "Behold thy mother."

Eliminate Mary, or the honor due her as the Mother of God, from the Holy Bible, and you with one erasure nullify every truth that has come down from heaven concerning her son Jesus, the Redeemer of men, and you make the Scriptures meaningless, a veritable compilation of myths.

Mary is chosen from all eternity as the mother of the Savior. "I was set up from eternity, and of old before the earth was made." (Prov. viii, 23.) God speaks of her in types, in figures, and in prophecy. He compares her virginity to that of the angels, her charity to the love of the seraphim, her wisdom to that of the cherubim, her purity to that of the heavens, her splendor to the brightness of the stars, her beauty to that of the verdant fields, the abundant fruits of her sublime virtues to those that bend the branches of the fruit trees to the very earth with the great abundance of their luscious fruit. "When He prepared the heavens, I was there." (Prov. viii, 27.) Mary was before God when He made the heavens, for He wished the beauty of them to be a figure of the Blessed Virgin, who was to be a living heaven where the plenitude of the divinity should dwell corporally. "I was with him forming all things; and was delighted every day, playing before him at all times, playing in the world." (Prov. viii, 30, 31.) These words are admirably applicable to Mary, for God in His wisdom was

pleased to announce her to us in figure, in Eve, in the Ark of Noah, in that of the Covenant, in the burning bush, in the rod of Aaron. "I came out of the mouth of the Most High, the firstborn before all creatures." (Eccl. xxiv, 5.) Mary was destined to be the first of all God's creatures, the model of purity, and sanctity, the seat of grace and wisdom. "The Most High hath sanctified his own tabernacle; God is in the midst thereof." (Ps. xlv, 5, 6.)

The Apostle assures us that God made choice of the elect in Jesus Christ before the foundation of the world: "He chose us in him before the foundation of the world." (Eph. i, 4.) But those who are to fill special offices, He prepares more particularly, so that they may perform His wishes worthily. Jesus is pre-eminently the first, "who was predestinated the Son of God in power." (Rom. i, 4.) Following Him, his virgin mother stands out the first of mankind. She is in very truth the correlative of the God-man. Hence is she saluted by the angel: "Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with thee, blessed art thou among women." (Luke i, 28.)

Next to her divine Son, Mary, beyond all other creatures, is heralded in figure and prophecy. "I will put enmities between thee and the woman, and thy seed and her seed: she shall crush thy

head, and thou shalt lie in wait for her heel.”
(Gen. iii, 15.)

In Isaias: “Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign. Behold a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and his name shall be called Emmanuel.” (Isa. vii, 14.)

And in Jeremias: “How long wilt thou be absolute in deliciousness, O wandering daughter? for the Lord hath created a new thing upon the earth: A woman shall compass a man.” (Jerem. xxxi, 22.) She was typified by Judith and by Esther, who delivered the people of God, and were declared to be “blessed among women.”

I have said that in the councils of God a mother and her child should bring back blessings to earth. Now although the mother is a creature, and the child a Creator, yet this Creator has deigned to give His mother precedence in this very matter of touching with heaven’s blessing an earth accursed for four thousand years.

It is of faith that she was conceived without sin, and this by the anticipated merits of Christ in her regard. Hence her Immaculate Conception was the primal contact of earth with heaven, and therefore its very first blessing in the order of redemption.

She was the greatest of women, and her image must come up every time we think of our soul’s salvation or of the means by which it was effected.

She alone can say in the words of the Bible: "I am clean and without sin; I am unspotted, and there is no iniquity in me." (Job xxxiii, 9.)

She shares in the enmity of her child against the serpent and contributes her part in the crushing of his head. Satan leveled his bow and arrow not only against the Christ but also against His Immaculate Mother. "The dragon was angry against the woman"; "and he persecuted the woman who brought forth the man child." (Apoc. xii, 17, 13.)

God is truly "wonderful in His saints" (Ps. lxvii, 36), and in none more than in His spotless mother, for "There shall no evil come to thee, nor shall the scourge come near thy dwelling." (Ps. xc, 10.) The exalted dignity of Jesus Christ demanded that His mother should, at no time of her existence, be under the dominion of His arch-enemy, Satan. He could not see His Father's work engulfed in ruin, could not see His wisdom and omnipotence foiled by the venom of a serpent; could not see creatures with immortal souls and capable of love, of gratitude and praise of their Creator equal to that of angels—such beings He could not see go down to perdition without a supreme effort to save them; and so, out of pure mercy, He said the word: "Behold I come." And He "set His tabernacle in the sun" (Ps. xviii, 6); that is to say, in that orb of immacu-

late purity, midst the virginal lilies of Mary's most pure womb did He tabernacle in the flesh. As her Son He must favor her above all other creatures. He could not bestow more graces upon St. John the Baptist, Jeremias the prophet, Adam and Eve, than upon His mother; right well is it therefore said of her: "Fear not: thou shalt not die; for this law is not made for thee, but for all others." (Est. xv, 12, 13.)

The Father had predestinated her, the Holy Ghost had sanctified her as His spouse, and the Son graced her with spotlessness. Fittingly then does the Church apply these words of the Canticle of Canticles to the soul and body of the Blessed Virgin, "Thou art all fair, O my beloved, and there is not a spot in thee" (Cant. iv, 7); and these other words of the book of Judith: "Thou art the glory of Jerusalem, thou art the joy of Israel, thou art the honour of our people." (Judith xv, 10.)

The prophetic words of Isaias, which apply to Jesus Christ the Savior of men, are likewise applicable to Mary, without whom the Word would not be made flesh: "Drop down dew, ye heavens, from above, and let the clouds rain the just; let the earth be open and bud forth a Savior." (Isa. xlvi, 8.) "A star shall rise out of Jacob." (Numb. xxiv, 17.)

She is that star, the morning star that an-

nounces the rising of the Sun of Eternal Justice, the Son of God. At her birth the angels are said to have admiringly cried out: "Who is she that cometh forth as the morning rising, fair as the moon, bright as the sun, terrible as an army set in array?" (Cant. vi, 9.)

Her nativity was as the dawn of the day wherein the Savior was born; she is as fair as the luminary that shines with a reflected light, the light of her Divine Son; "she is as bright as the sun," for she "is the woman clothed with the sun" (Apoc. xii, 1); and she is terrible, indeed, to the powers of darkness, for they never at any moment had her, the mother of their Conqueror, in their power.

"And there shall come forth a rod out of the root of Jesse, and a flower shall rise up out of his root. And the spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him: the spirit of wisdom and of understanding, the spirit of counsel and of fortitude, the spirit of knowledge and of godliness. And he shall be filled with the spirit of the fear of the Lord." (Isa. xi, 1, 2, 3.)

These prophetic words of Isaias were fulfilled to the letter in the person of the ever Blessed Virgin Mary at her birth.

By a law of Moses, both men and women could, if they so elected, dedicate themselves to

the service of God in the temple for a period of time or for life.

The saintly parents of Mary presented her in the temple at the early age of three years, from which time until her fifteenth year she remained there with the maidens, "who departed not from the temple, by fasting and prayers, serving night and day." (Luke ii, 37.)

By her devotion to duty, her exalted virtues, her great humility, her surpassing sanctity, her many graces, Mary was an edification and inspiration to all who served in the wondrous temple of Jerusalem. In imitation of her noble and holy example, hundreds of thousands of other virgins have sought a refuge from the world near the tabernacle of God, and dedicated their whole life to the practice of the most austere virtues and the service of God and man. For "after her shall virgins be brought to the King . . . they shall be brought into the temple of the King." (Ps. xliv, 14, 16.)

In the providence of God the time had come when He would send His only begotten Son into the world for its redemption. To this end He had prepared, not only a mother full of grace, who being overshadowed by the Spirit of the Most High, should conceive and bring forth the Savior of men, but He had also chosen a just man who

should have in his faithful keeping the mother and her child. "A virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David." (Luke i, 27.) The chaste, holy Joseph was to be their protector. He was the "faithful and wise servant, whom his Lord hath set over his family, to give them meat in season." (Matt. xxiv, 45.)

In accordance with the design of the Father, Joseph was to keep secret the personality of the Son of Mary; for, "when the Christ cometh, no man knoweth whence he is." (John vii, 27.)

The prophecies made to the Patriarchs and Prophets were now nearing their fulfilment. "I beseech thee, Lord, send whom thou wilt send." (Exod. iv, 13.)

The darksome clouds that, like a somber veil, hid the face of God from man, were about to be brushed aside; the heavens that were closed for thousands of years, were to be opened, and from out the eternal bosom of the Creator was to come the long promised Just One.

"The Angel Gabriel was sent from God into a city of Galilee, called Nazareth, to a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David, and the virgin's name was Mary. And the Angel being come in, said unto her: Hail, full of grace, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women." (Luke i, 26-

28.) Mary is the temple of the living God, all graces, all perfections adorn her immaculate soul; the Lord is with her in a special manner to bring about the wonderful work of the Incarnation of His Divine Word; she is the blessed of all women, being elevated above the heavens, more powerful than the earth, greater than the universe, for she alone possessed Him whom the world could not contain. She was troubled at the salutation of the messenger of God and thought within herself what it might be. "And the angel said to her: Fear not, Mary, for thou hast found grace with God." (Luke i, 30.) Why fear, O Virgin of virgins, who art equal to the most sublime of the angels, and the God of the angels is within thee? "Behold thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and shalt bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of David his father; and he shall reign in the house of Jacob forever. And of his kingdom there shall be no end. And Mary said to the angel: How shall this be done, because I know not man? And the angel answering, said to her: The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Most High shall overshadow thee. And therefore also the Holy which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God." (Luke i, 31-35.)

“The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee”; hence the conception of Jesus Christ is holy. As man He is godly by reason of His hypostatic union with the Word and because of His divine conception, not by a man, nor by an angel, but by the Holy Ghost.

He is not, therefore, by His divine conception, a child of Adam. He must not have even the breath of the original stain upon Him and be born into the world with its blight; but He is all holy, all pure, the Just One. “And Jacob begot Joseph, the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ.” (Matt. i, 16.) The Evangelist does not say: Joseph begot Jesus as he indites of the ancestors of the Messiah, “Abraham begot Isaac, and Isaac begot Jacob, and Jacob begot Judas and his brethren. And Judas begot Phares and Zara of Thamar. And Phares begot Esron. And Esron begot Aram” (Matt. i, 2, 3), and so on till Jacob begot Joseph, the husband of Mary. Nor does the sacred writer say: Mary begot Jesus, whilst it is true that she did, but he writes: “Mary of whom was born Jesus.”

He hereby gives us to understand that “Jesus is born of Mary” not by any natural virtue, but by a supernatural virtue, that is, by the power and operation of the Holy Ghost; that Christ was not begotten by Joseph, but that He is born of Mary.

solely, hence of a virgin overshadowed by the Holy Spirit, who is the principal cause of the Incarnation. Mary is indeed the secondary cause, actively by reason of her consent given to the angel, passively by supplying of her heart's pure blood to form the body of Jesus Christ. Mary is the blessed among women of whom the Prophet spoke: "Behold a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and his name shall be called Emmanuel." (Isa. vii, 14.)

"He shall be great and shall be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of David his father; and he shall reign in the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there shall be no end." (Luke i, 32, 33.) Only after the Blessed Virgin received the promise of the angel that she should remain a virgin, did she give her consent to become the mother of the Savior: "Behold the handmaid of the Lord, be it done to me according to thy word." (Luke i, 38.)

An incontestable proof that Joseph respected the vow of virginity which Mary had made, is his design of repudiating her, not knowing as yet the mystery of the Incarnation. An angel of God must acquaint him with it.

"Whereupon Joseph her husband, being a just man and not willing publicly to expose her, was minded to put her away privately. But while he

thought on these things, behold the angel of the Lord appeared to him in his sleep, saying: Joseph, son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife, for that which is conceived in her, is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a son; and thou shalt call his name Jesus. For he shall save his people from their sins. Now all this was done that it might be fulfilled which the Lord spoke by the prophet, saying: Behold a virgin shall be with child, and bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us. And Joseph rising up from sleep, did as the angel of the Lord had commanded him, and took unto him his wife. And he knew her not till she brought forth her first born son: and he called his name Jesus." (Matt. i, 19-25.)

The Holy Ghost will overshadow Mary, that is, will conceal as by a cloud the secret of all secrets, the mystery of all mysteries, which will take place in her, the most stupendous of miracles.

The Holy Ghost will overshadow thee, said the angel. This you shall know most certainly; you shall understand with infinite happiness, but you shall have this knowledge from the author of all good gifts; but because of your divine conception "the Holy which shall be born of thee shall be called the son of God." (Luke i, 35.) "And behold thy cousin Elizabeth, she also hath con-

ceived a son in her old age; and this is the sixth month with her that is called barren: Because no word shall be impossible with God." (Luke i, 36, 37.)

The messenger of God establishes the miracle of the Incarnation by another miracle, that of her cousin Elizabeth, who shall bring forth a child in her old age. For nothing is impossible with God. His word is not different from His will, nor His action from His word, nor His manner of performing it from the act. "And Mary said: Behold the handmaid of the Lord, be it done to me according to thy word." (Luke i, 38.)

Let it therefore be as God wills it. And in that instant Mary conceived the incarnate Word. "Mary of whom was born Jesus." (Matt. i, 16.)

Mary is the mother of the Divine Logos become man; Jesus, being united hypostatically with God, is God-man. As there is but one person in Jesus Christ, the divine person, Mary is truly the mother of Christ, of divine grace, of our Creator, of our Redeemer, of God.

"The word was made flesh and dwelt among us." (John i, 14.) "And the Word was God." (John i, 1.) But as the Word conceived in her womb was God, Mary is necessarily His mother, most pure, most chaste, most amiable, most admirable.

The very concession of the Incarnation is the

admission that Mary is the mother of God; for deny that she is His mother and you in the same breath deny the Incarnation of the Word.

In the Incarnation God takes unto Himself human nature, becomes man, but still remains God. From the moment of the Incarnation, He is true man and true God. These two natures, the divine and human, are united in one person and this union is hypostatic. The two distinct natures are consequently united but by no means confounded in the One Divine Person. Jesus, in His human nature, is the Son of the Blessed Virgin Mary, who as a consequence is as really His mother as any woman is the mother of her son.

True, Mary is not the mother of God in His Divine Nature and to assert it would be blasphemous, but God become man is nevertheless God, God in His human nature as He is God in His divine nature, and hence Mary is God's mother because she is mother of the Word made flesh. There can be nothing more sublime, more worthy of the omnipotence of God than the Incarnation of His Word and the divine maternity of Mary His mother. In it He unites our humanity with His divinity in a hypostatic union, while the divine maternity of Mary is the relationship with God Himself. By her maternity, she is to God what any mother is to her son, even more if

such were possible; for she is more a mother than are other mothers. These are so only with the father, while Mary conceived alone, and gave birth to her son not naturally but supernaturally, which is all the more perfect. "Blessed is the womb that bore thee, and the paps that gave thee suck." (Luke xi, 27.) And why? Because she gave of her immaculate blood to Him who is the Creator of all things, that He might become one of us. She bore in her virginal womb Him who is the God of the heavens and of the earth; she possessed Him who possesses all things. Mary the mother of God is the marvel of the ages, the wonder of all nature, the prodigy of the whole universe.

Well, then, may we exclaim with the Psalmist: "This is the Lord's doing; and it is wonderful in our eyes." (Ps. cxvii, 23.)

After the Incarnation of the Divine Word, the humble Virgin Mary arises from prayer and repairs to a little city of Juda: "And Mary rising up in those days, went into the hill country with haste into a city of Juda. And she entered into the house of Zachary, and saluted Elizabeth. And it came to pass, that when Elizabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the infant leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost. And she cried out with a loud voice, and said: Blessed art thou among women, and

blessed is the fruit of thy womb. And whence is this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?" (Luke i, 39-43.) And Zachary in turn filled with the Holy Ghost also prophesied: "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel: because he hath visited and wrought the redemption of his people: And hath raised up an horn of salvation to us, in the house of David his servant." (Luke i, 68, 69.)

This spotless Virgin Mary is therefore the one chosen from all eternity to crush under her heel the head of the serpent; to give birth to the Only Begotten of the Father through whom is salvation; to bless the earth with her Son and by Him to reöpen heaven.

It was at the time of her visit to her cousin Elizabeth that Mary, inspired by the Holy Ghost, gave forth, in transports of gratitude and love, her grand Magnificat. "My soul doth magnify the Lord. And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Savior. Because he hath regarded the humility of his handmaid; for behold from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed. Because he that is mighty, hath done great things to me; and holy is his name. And his mercy is from generation unto generations, to them that fear him. He hath showed might in his arm: he hath scattered the proud in the conceit of their heart. He hath put down the mighty from their

seat, and hath exalted the humble. He hath filled the hungry with good things; and the rich he hath sent empty away. He hath received Israel his servant, being mindful of his mercy: As he spoke to our fathers, to Abraham and to his seed forever." (Luke i, 46-55.)

After remaining some months with her cousin Elizabeth, she returned to her home. In those days Cæsar Augustus sent out a decree ordering that the whole world should be enrolled. Joseph and Mary responded to the command and went to be enrolled in the city of David, which is called Bethlehem. Whilst there "she brought forth her first-born son, and wrapped him up in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger; because there was no room for them in the inn." (Luke ii, 7.)

In the country about there were shepherds, who were keeping the night watches over their flock. The brightness of heaven shone upon them and an angel appeared to them. They were greatly alarmed, but the angel quieted their fears and gave them word of the great event that had just come to pass. "For this day is born to you a Savior, who is Christ the Lord, in the city of David. And this shall be a sign unto you: You shall find the infant wrapped in swaddling clothes and laid in a manger." (Luke ii, 11, 12.)

At this announcement the shepherds hastened

to Bethlehem, where they found Mary and Joseph and the Infant lying in the manger. Later on wise men from the east also came, and after many hardships endured patiently, they find the Child with Mary His mother "and falling down they adored him, and opening their treasures, they offered him gifts; gold, frankincense, and myrrh." (Matt. ii, 11.)

The humble and the great paid homage to the child Jesus in the manger and honored His mother. "And after the days of her purification, according to the law of Moses, were accomplished, they carried him to Jerusalem, to present him to the Lord." (Luke ii, 22.)

The holy man Simeon, who received the Child into his arms in the temple, praised the Virgin and proclaimed her glory, Anna the prophetess announced the greatness of her Son, Mary alone was silent: "And his mother kept all these words in her heart." (Luke ii, 51.) But she praised God all the while.

She is a virgin mother; this fact is known to God, to Jesus, to Joseph, and this is her comfort, her joy, her all. She is the constant companion of her Son, a witness of His miracles, a sympathizer in His sorrows, an attentive hearer of His every word, a faithful follower of His life, the first to accompany Him on His way to Calvary, where beneath His cross she stood sorrowful, her

own soul pierced with a sword of sorrow when His divine and sacred heart was transfixed with a lance. Everywhere the Bible associates the Immaculate Mother with her Divine Son, from the manger to the cross and the grave.

In the secrets of God she was to live for some years after the resurrection and ascension of Jesus into the kingdom of His Father. He must go to send, according to His promise, the Holy Ghost upon the Apostles, she must remain to be their light in the absence of Jesus, the true light of the world.

At last the hour has come that she is to be conducted into the realms of never-ending bliss. The heavens open to receive her, Jesus advances to bid her welcome and the whole heavenly court comes to meet her: "And the temple of God was opened in heaven: and the ark of his testament was seen in his temple." (Apoc. xi, 19.)

This ark of the covenant is Mary: "And a great sign appeared in heaven: a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars." (Apoc. xii, 1.)

Behold the mother of the Creator transported into heaven to take her place beside her Lord in the eternal mansions of the Most High. "The queen," thy spouse, O Lord, "stood on thy right hand, in gilded clothing." (Ps. xliv, 10.)

Astonished, rejoicing, overcome with admiration, the choirs of angels exclaim at her coming: "Who is she that cometh forth as the morning rising, fair as the moon, bright as the sun, terrible as an army set in array?" (Cant. vi, 9.)

And again: "Who is this that cometh up from the desert, flowing with delights, leaning upon her beloved?" (Cant. viii, 5.)

But what tongue can fittingly tell of that surpassing triumph or of the glories of Mary the mother of Jesus, our own sweet mother, "behold thy mother." (John xix, 27.) No tongue of mortal man or of angel or archangel could adequately describe them; we can only leave it to the inspired word of the sacred writer. "Howbeit we speak wisdom among the perfect: yet not the wisdom of this world, neither of the princes of this world that come to naught; . . . but as it is written: That eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man, what things God hath prepared for them that love him." (I Cor. ii, 6-9.)

God fits us for our destiny ere He bids us to undertake it. And when He gave to Mary the glorious mission of being the mother of His only begotten Son, He did not fail to see that she must have peculiar gifts and graces in order to acquit herself with devotion and love in the sublime and heavenly duty which it involved. But in the plan

of God's creation the rôle which our hope, our sweetness, our life, Mary, was elected to fill, so far transcended that of all other creatures, even that of the angels who minister at His eternal throne, as the heavens are high above the earth.

In her God shows forth His omnipotence, His infinite wisdom and love; His labor and workmanship are resplendent and bright in her, the masterpiece of His almighty creative hand. And so well did this humble handmaid of the Lord requite His infinite love for her that she died for love of Him, in the words of the Canticle: "For love is strong as death." (Cant. viii, 6.)

Who shall tell the love Mary has for God? Who shall fathom the abyss of that mother's heart for Jesus? Only God who searches the innermost recesses of man's soul knows the height and depth, the width and breadth of the love of His mother's most pure heart for Him. And the only possible requital for such profound, all-absorbing love is solely in God's gift.

Like the silvery voice of the humble maiden that floats down the mountain slopes, over the green meadows and verdant fields far below, into the ears of the lowly husbandman at his work, or into those of the shepherds grazing their flocks; like a message from the dear old home, when we are far, far away; like the light that shoots athwart the heavens through the rifts of dark-

some clouds, or the glad tidings of the home-coming of the long-expected one, is Mary's place in the Bible.

It had begun in Genesis and ended not until the pages of the Apocalypse were sealed. It runs like a dominant chord throughout the whole gamut of the Bible.

Since God has so honored His Virgin Mother, it is most assuredly His holy will that we should serve, honor and tenderly love her also.

In honoring His works, especially the most excellent of them all, we honor Him, for the glory of the work redounds to the glory of the workman, and is wholly converted into Him. If then you wish to love God, love Mary. She is His mother, His daughter, His well-beloved spouse. She is our mother, our advocate and our hope at the seat of mercy.

Our help is in her. Yes, sweet mother, we fly to thy patronage and Oh! protect us, your children, guard us against all evil and save us. Let us hope and pray this blessing for all, so that no voice may be mute and no heart unstirred by the full truth of those words of the angelic salutation: "Hail, Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee; blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus."

Daily, hourly our prayer should be that which the great heart of our holy mother, the Church,

pours forth to her, day by day, from the lips of the faithful in union with God's minister at the altar, following the august, though unbloody sacrifice of Calvary:

Hail! holy queen; hail our life, our sweetness and our hope! To thee do we cry, poor banished children of Eve; to thee do we send up our sighs, mourning and weeping in this valley of tears. Turn then, most gracious advocate, thine eyes of mercy towards us, and after this our exile, show unto us the blessed fruit of thy womb, Jesus; O clement, O pious, O sweet Virgin Mary.

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